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ELEMENTARY LANGUAGE BULLETIN

(INTERIM EDITION)



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA



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SPECIAL NOTE

This interim edition of the language bulletin will be used on an experimental basis in selected classrooms during the 1957-58 school term. Further revision and the bulletin's ultimate usefulness will depend upon the thoroughness of its trial and upon the number of constructive criticisms which ensue.

INTRODUCTION: THE PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Its Contents

Teachers of elementary schools in Alberta should derive considerable satisfaction from the use of this curriculum guide which purports to give the teacher some skilful direction without prescription. A perusal of the table of contents will help the teacher realize the importance of:

- (a) Knowing the children with whom we are working
- (b) Having a clear-cut objective
- (c) Understanding how language expression develops
- (d) Accepting the fact that the class room should be a language laboratory
- (e) Acknowledging the possibilities and limitations of textbooks and other source materials.

This curriculum guide attempts to broaden the teacher's outlook with respect to instructional approaches which involve:

- (a) Experience
- (b) Thought
- (c) Expression — both oral and written.

The section entitled "Evaluation of Oral and Written Expression" suggests several excellent techniques which many teachers are using effectively for the purpose of lessening the burden of correcting pupils' written expression.

One important aspect of a good language program is that which deals with "The Mechanics of Expression" including punctuation, capitalization, spelling, grammar and usage. Teachers should note the rather detailed treatment of spelling.

Part VII of Chapter 2 deals with three specific study skills which teachers should help elementary pupils acquire.

Most teachers will likely find the information contained in Chapter 3 most helpful. "Ideas That Have Worked" represents a very small sample of practical ideas which Alberta teachers have used successfully.

The language arts are generally thought to include reading, writing, and oral expression, and other closely associated skills. All these skills are not, however, represented in this language bulletin, nor may the teacher measure the relative importance of the skills which are represented by the amount of space allocated to each.

Reading, for example, is not discussed here, partly because it needs a more detailed treatment than would be possible in this bulletin, and further because it receives ample coverage in the manuals to authorized readers. Writing, included in Bulletin III, is mentioned only in passing, while Spelling comprises a rather full section. Thus, in this bulletin those sections were included which were thought to be of the greatest possible use to the teachers of Alberta.

The Use of This Guide

(a) BY THE INDIVIDUAL TEACHER

Every elementary teacher should acquire a thorough understanding of the principles contained in the language program, as outlined in this guide. This means that the Grade I teachers should study the programs of Grades Two and Three particularly; the Grade Five teachers should be acquainted with the programs of Grades Four and Six, etc.

Although the guide does not attempt to prescribe a language program in great detail, it does chart a possible course of action. The inexperienced teacher should realize that this course has grown out of the experience of many successful teachers in Alberta schools. Through patient, studied effort on the part of the teacher and pupils most of the objectives of this program can be achieved satisfactorily. Since language is a medium of communication in the other subjects and activities related to school life, the teacher should not try to confine language instruction to a textbook or workbook. Rather the teacher should realize that language is the most common currency of expression. Every classroom should be a language laboratory where the teacher and pupils are continually experimenting with the various phases of the language program. The guide provides some answers to such vital questions as: What should be taught? Why should it be taught? How should it be taught? To what extent have the objectives been achieved?

The alert teacher is a professional worker who is vitally concerned not only with the immediate classroom situation but with some ideas about how present practices can be improved. In other words the good teacher uses the guide to facilitate further research through reading, experimenting, and evaluating her own professional practices and the achievements of her class. The expert teacher records her findings for the benefit of other members of the staff, and for the benefit of her professional colleagues.

The effective language teacher will not become a slave to this guide. However, it is likely that the teacher who uses it as one would use the services of an expert or consultant will gain confidence and skill in implementing the language program.

Building a Language Program

The process of building a language program in any elementary school, either large or small, involves some type of unified effort on the part of the principal and his staff. Sometimes a staff is composed of experienced teachers with demonstrated competence. Quite often, however, some of the teachers lack either sufficient training or experience to enable them to cope with the multitude of language problems which commonly exist in any community.

When staff assignments are made by the superintendent, often in consultation with the principal, there is an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each teacher. The principal, through the encouragement and leadership of the superintendent, should make plans as early in the school year as possible for the staff to meet and discuss the elementary school program. It is becoming rather common practice in many Alberta schools for teachers to meet either as a staff or as "grade" committees to discuss ways and means of improving language instruction. In some instances the elementary teachers of school divisions, counties, or city systems have organized conventions, institutes and workshops to deal with language teaching. In other words, educational leadership from various sources has sparked staff efforts to the extent that hundreds of teachers are now actively engaged in a wide variety of interesting language-improvement projects. In many areas personnel from the Department of Education have been invited by superintendents and principals to share in these worthwhile activities.

The superintendent can facilitate in-service work in language by (1) arranging with the school board for meeting time, (2) providing professional source books, (3) giving continuity to staff effort through the system, (4) giving his expert advice and encouragement, and (5) arranging for outside consultants to assist a staff that needs special help.

The principal is the key person as far as a single staff is concerned. He is the person who works intimately with each teacher and each class. The superintendent cannot possibly give the day-to-day encouragement and advice that teachers need to execute a detailed program of language instruction.

What steps might a principal and his staff take?

1. Become thoroughly acquainted with the language problem of the *entire* elementary school by studying this guide.
2. Make a status study of language achievement in the school. That is, determine the strengths and weaknesses of the language problem offered in the school. Determine the existing standards of oral and written communication.
3. Try to discover the causes of existing weaknesses.
4. Plan a program of attack to improve language instruction.
5. Evaluate the on-going program from time to time.
6. The staff should read extensively and intensively.

Action research is one rather fruitful procedure by which a staff can arrive at sensible answers to pressing problems relating to language teaching.

Generally speaking, the most satisfying results occur when the pupils share in some of the decisions by which the language program is to be improved.

Needless to say children grow in communication skills when from grade to grade and from year to year the staff plans appropriate experiences to meet the needs of pupils. Unity and co-operation on the part of the staff will facilitate normal growth of pupils.

The language program as outlined in this curriculum guide should help to insure better language instruction in Alberta schools. Before this program can be implemented to the fullest extent it will be necessary for some teachers to change their approach to the teaching of a language. To assist professional people to make this change (in many instances a most radical change) this guide should serve a very useful purpose.

A. BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Certain fundamental principles form the basis of a good language program.

- I. Effective expression is the objective of all language activity. Instruction and exercises are useful only if they contribute directly to this end.
- II. Oral language logically comes before and contributes to written expression. Organized and purposeful oral language is one of the more important objectives of the language program.
- III. Critical thinking (judging and evaluating) produces organized and purposeful expression. Ineffective expression indicates disorganized thought; effective expression follows clear thinking.
- IV. Language is part of every subject. Efficient expression makes for clear communication of ideas.
- V. Language instruction must be geared to the development of the child. Since children develop at different rates, provision must be made for individual differences.
- VI. Language competency develops as follows:
 1. There is an intake of individual or common experiences to provide raw material for expression.
 2. An opportunity presents itself to discuss or to verbalize about these experiences. Oral language builds understanding, develops and enriches vocabulary, and motivates expression.
 2. An opportunity presents itself to discuss or to verbalize about these experiences. Oral language builds understanding, develops and enriches vocabulary, and motivates expression.
 3. Extensive opportunity for experience in writing is given since writing is learned by writing.
 4. Pupil and teacher evaluation indicate specific needs in the language program.
- VII. Critical self-evaluation must be stressed by teaching particular pupil-evaluation techniques.
- VIII. Through the language program a child should come to realize that he may learn more effective ways of communicating.

WHEN YOU TEACH LANGUAGE:

Do you spend too much time marking language?

Does your marking result in improvement?

Have you used pupil-evaluation techniques?

Do you stress oral language in your classroom?

Are you aware of the part oral language plays as
preparation for writing?

When did you last *tell* a story?

B. THE CHILDREN WITH WHOM WE ARE WORKING

A knowledge of the children with whom we are working is essential if a language program is to be effective in improving expression. There follows an indication of behaviour that might be expected as a child develops, both in language skill and in other ways. It is to be remembered that children develop in different ways and at different speeds. Thus, any general description of behavior must be modified in terms of the specific children in your classroom.

What Children Are Like

What They Can Do With Language

The Six-Year-Old

Extremely active; tires easily.

Needs 11-12 hours of sleep plus frequent rests through the day.

Development of small muscles still incomplete.

Usually reaches reading readiness at about 6½ years mental age.

Ignores sex, race, social status in work or play.

Needs orderly consistent routine.

Shifts quickly to opposite extremes of behavior.

Learns through participation and activity, not by rote.

Continues to express himself in spontaneous dramatization and imitation.

Does not co-operate well in organized games.

Needs to be taught to take turns. Enjoys stories, poems, and comics of animals, children, nature.

Begins to keep to a topic.

Describes a picture instead of enumerating objects within it.

Words more meaningful in terms of their use.

Reads experience charts.

Acquires readiness and a desire for writing.

Develops sentence sense.

May print name in capitals and small letters.

Associates words with pictures and objects when they apply to personal experiences.

Begins to have more confidence in articulation of sounds.

Speech inaccuracies and difficulties may still exist.

Likes to copy simple pictures and forms.

Enjoys re-telling stories and reciting nursery rhymes.

The Seven-Year-Old

Continues to be very active and likes games.

Needs periods of rest and relaxation and 10-11 hours of sleep.

Small muscles development not yet refined.

Enjoys stunts and skills.

Tends to periods of self-absorption.

Has usually ceased to have tantrums.

Is self-critical, erases frequently, needs encouragement.

Seeks approval of teacher rather than of classmates.

Is beginning to develop time and distance concepts.

Enjoys listening to and reading stories, poems, comics of animals, magic and fairy stories.

Can relate events in sequence.

Can recognize double meanings of words.

Oral speech patterns begin to conform grammatically.

Recognizes slight differences in word forms.

Shows interest in reading somewhat new material.

Shows progress in attacking new words.

Can write alphabet from memory.

Can copy in manuscript writing short stories composed by the group.

Writes original sentence with some punctuation and capitalization.

Has mastered acceptable speech sounds.

The Eight-Year-Old

Continues to be physically active but balances it with looking at books and listening to adult programs.

Small muscles now definitely ready for weaving, sewing, writing.

Eyes ready for rapid reading and silent reading speed faster than oral.

Plays and works with group but not yet ready for gang or clubs.

More realistic thinking. Disclaims Santa Claus.

Contrasts past and present and curious about the past.

Still learns best by participation but can learn by rote.

Delights in jokes and riddles.

Still enjoys books about children, animals and fairies but has a new interest in the far away and long ago.

Improved independence in writing simple sentences.

Copies co-operatively developed compositions.

Knows alphabet well.

Unable to measure up to good intentions in neatness and alignment of writing.

Takes new pleasure in rapid silent reading.

Improved ability to analyze new words.

Reads first grade material with ease and enjoyment; that of second and third grade with comprehension (under teacher guidance).

Uses table of contents.

Increasing command of language in group dictation and personal writing.

The Nine-Year-Old

Skilled in motor performances and can sustain speed for longer intervals.

Often over-stimulated; finds it difficult to settle down after recess or games.

Likely to be careless in dress and appearance. Needs adult insistence on standards.

Often more interested in playmates than in family though he accepts some responsibility at home.

Antagonistic toward opposite sex.

Ready for perfecting skills of arithmetic, reading, spelling, handwriting.

Bases most of reasoning on observation.

Interested in making collections.

Enjoys wild west stories, fairy stories, adventure and factual reading material.

Participates in discussions; will defend his own position.

Close to adult level of grammatical usage.

Shows increased independence in attacking new words.

Reads up to fourth grade material with comprehension.

Uses indexes, dictionary, telephone book, catalogue, encyclopedia.

Rapid gain in silent reading rate.

Composes short social notes and business letters.

Assumes responsibility for punctuation and capitalization in personal writing.

The Ten-Year-Old

Has usually developed sufficient co-ordination for pen and ink writing.

Plays in organized games and shows team loyalty.

Characterized by interest in silly antics, practical jokes, secret communications.

Appreciates other people's points of view.

Girls spend much time on clothes and hair.

May have higher regard for gang than for family.

May participate in discussions of social problems.

Has developed as either a verbal or non-verbal learner.

Keen interest in facts.

Reads Grade 3 level with ease and enjoyment and Grades 4 and 5 with comprehension when guided.

Uses dictionary more systematically.

Consults index, glossary, table of contents of supplementary books.

Consults encyclopedia of own accord.

Learns how to skim for thought and search for main idea of a story.

Makes simple outline with guidance.

Shows some paragraph sense.

Improving ability in writing brief stories, letters, notices, etc.

Improved command of language mechanics.

The Eleven-Year-Old

Personal hygiene habits well founded if training has been given.

May show sudden rapid growth spurts.

Play still strenuous; needs 8-9 hours of sleep.

Near adult level of eye-hand coordination.

Widened social contacts and group conformity.

Near adult ability in rote memory. Power to generalize and make deductions.

Increasing interest in science, nature, and home life.

Likes to participate in community activities.

Reads fourth grade material with ease and enjoyment and sixth with comprehension if guided.

Silent reading at about adult speed.

Uses library card indexes and references books intelligently.

Retains ideas well.

Improved paragraph sense; indenting, topic sentence; facts in order.

Writes fifty to sixty letters per minute legibly.

Oral speech refined to acceptable adult patterns.

C. HOW LANGUAGE EXPRESSION DEVELOPS

Effective language expression can be developed through a series of carefully planned activities designed to prepare and motivate the child to write. Each of these stages is important for the omission of one may mean failure.

1. *Experience-Intake*

Effective language activity begins with a common experience, real or vicarious, which provides raw material for the oral and written expression to follow. A whole class rarely has such experiences in common, which partly explains why many traditional and general topics, such as "My Summer Holidays", meet with failure. To ensure adequate experience-intake, common experiences are best provided in the classroom as natural outgrowths of such subjects as enterprise and science (see page 34).

2. *Oral Expression*

Experience-intake, though essential, does not always result in expression. Children may have common experiences, but may not desire to communicate with others about them nor may they be equipped to do so. Understanding, vital to critical thinking, and vocabulary may both be inadequate.

Class discussion deepens the child's understanding of an event and heightens his interest in it, thus motivating him to write. Purposeful oral expression paves the way for writing and is an important practice in itself. In the course of the discussion vocabulary is introduced and meanings broadened and deepened. The child is ready to write.

3. *Written Expression*

Though the children have an experience and the class discussion in common, individual effort is encouraged when they write. Each sincere attempt must be respected since a child should enjoy writing, and writing is enjoyable if it is successful. Writing opportunities should occur frequently for written expression improves only when the child is properly prepared each time he writes and when he is able to write often.

4. *Evaluation*

Evaluation pre-supposes objectives. Before a child begins to write he has a general goal, to communicate certain ideas, and in addition a realization that errors interfere with effective communication. A child should be helped to examine his speaking or writing in terms of these objectives (see page 44).

The teacher's objectives are similar in many respects to those of the child but are based on a broader knowledge of the needs and abilities of children. Teacher and pupil evaluation point to areas that need special attention in language period before expression begins again.

D. LANGUAGE AT WORK

Language is part of every subject. It cannot be separated from the content of any field. A teacher, in fact, teaches language throughout the day, only changing the subject matter to which language skills are applied.

Arithmetic becomes meaningful when children are able to see relationships expressed through the exact use of words. Teachers of arithmetic know that verbalizing about number ideas develops insight because it clarifies thinking. Thus teaching arithmetic is a problem in language to the extent that the test of complete understanding of an arithmetical concept is the ability to generalize about it.

Language skills are most easily taught when they are needed. The enthusiasm of the Enterprise class for a talk by a resource person can be directed to writing a thank-you letter. The ability to write a business letter is often required in Enterprise in writing for resource materials or information. Report-making and all the attendant language skills such as summarizing and paraphrasing, are needed in the Enterprise period and should be used there. Oral language plays a prominent part in Enterprise class discussions and in the proceedings during small-group activities.

In the reading period the stories and poems are a source of common experience. A story or a poem may be discussed and then written about. In addition, because of the nature of this common experience, the discussion about a story is particularly rich in the development of vocabulary.

The critical thinking which plays so important a role in science, is expressed through language which must be precise and economical. Exact thinking is revealed by clear expression. Science provides many opportunities for critical thinking and exact expression.

There are many other examples of how language is part of every subject. A wise teacher takes full advantage of this interrelatedness of subject matter to give meaning and purpose to language activities. Language period becomes a time for developing special skills required for effective oral and written expression in other activities.

WHEN YOU TEACH LANGUAGE:

How much time does your class spend filling
in blanks?

Does the organization of the workbooks fit
the particular needs of your class?

Is the use of a language workbook justified by
improvement in expression?

Which vocabulary and word forms do your
pupils use — yours or theirs?

Do your pupils recognize different levels of
usage?

USE OF TEXTS

From a language point of view every class in Alberta is different in two ways:

1. Language is an integral part of every school subject and activity. It grows out of the need to communicate in science, enterprise, and all subjects. But activities vary from class to class as the interests, needs, and abilities of the children vary. Thus, the language program in each class is unique.
2. Each class and, indeed, each child has individual language needs which will only be met by a program designed for that class or that child. It is unlikely that any two classes would have exactly the same language program.

Obviously, then, the text cannot be the course if we are to be successful in teaching language. Following a text page by page never meets the language needs of any class. It can only be an important aid in teaching language. It can serve as:

- (a) A source of exercises and ideas for those students who are having specific difficulties with their written work.
- (b) A source of suggestions for teachers in regard to methods and approaches in the teaching of language.
- (c) The text may serve as a guide for the many specific language skills that students at that level should be developing.

Language tests should be examined and evaluated in the light of these uses. One series may have the most logical pattern for the introduction of new ideas and material, another may have superior exercises and drills for certain language weaknesses and so on. Thus the texts should be used to the extent that they are helpful but are not to be considered something to be worked through page by page and slavishly followed.

A. EXPERIENCE

The value of providing an experience background for pupils has been discussed previously. Individual experiences are often just as rich in language possibilities, but unfortunately, have to be developed individually, and thus are wasteful of class time.

There are many possibilities for common experiences in school. Real experiences may include an excursion, the presence of a pet in the classroom, the visit of a resource person, a science experiment, the building of a road past the school, and many others. Vicarious experiences are valuable too and may include the reading of a story, the showing of a film, or a teacher lesson in any one of the subject areas.

The oral activity which follows experience-intake has many purposes. Of great importance is the way in which oral discussion may clarify and intensify the sense impressions the child has received. For example, a Grade IV class has just watched a film about the Congo region. Through discussion the teacher involves the senses of the children in the experience. She may inject such questions as the following into the discussion:

What sounds did you hear?

Did you notice the difference between the roar of
the lion and the cry of the leopard?

How did the ground feel under your feet?

What other sounds might you hear in the jungle?

Would it be easy to get a cold drink here?

Do you think it was hot where the picture was taken?

Did you smell anything by the water-hole?

What color was the river in the spring?

It may be of advantage to show the film after the pupils have become aware of the number of impressions that may actually be gained or imagined from it. Thus the experience becomes more valuable as a source of expression when all the senses are involved.

(Chapter 2 - PART I - B)

B. TEACHING PUPILS TO LISTEN

Since children spend much of their time listening, it is only reasonable to give some attention to the development and improvement of listening as a skill. Although reading and listening both aim to get thought from words, the two skills are very different. In reading the child sets his own pace; he can reread if necessary; he can reflect upon what he has read; he can make a few notes; he can organize these under suitable headings; he can even indulge in a little day-dreaming. Yet, when he returns, the printed page is there exactly as it was. Not so with listening. The child's mind must keep pace with the speaker. Unlike the printed word, the spoken word is beyond recall when his mind returns to the topic. Good listening habits are basic to good oral and written expression.

I. *Preparation*

1. Arrange desks for group listening.
2. Place any child with defective hearing in the most favorable position so that he can see as well as hear the speaker. Just off-centre front on the window side of the room is good for the hard-of-hearing.
3. Make sure that the teacher can be seen easily by all.
4. Create an atmosphere conducive to attentive listening by being relaxed and unhurried.
5. The teacher should have a clear, well-modulated voice and an expressive face. These should be used to convey enjoyment and the mood of the story.
6. Secure the attention of all before making an assignment.
7. Build up a background for major listening activities, such as radio programs, stories, or talks by visiting speakers.
8. Encourage the children to listen for what is said rather than for errors in usage.

II. *Exercises for Listening*

1. Listen to announcements and be able to answer: What? Why? Where? Who? What page? Which questions?
2. Listen to a set of instructions for making something or for playing a game, to an action story or to a description. Recall the instructions, actions or descriptive elements in correct order.
3. Listen to a paragraph read by the teacher to:
 - (a) determine the central thought and the supporting ideas
 - (b) delete irrelevant ideas
 - (c) find, from the context, the meaning of an unknown word previously announced by the teacher.
4. Listen to oral reports given by classmates in order to:
 - (a) make an outline or summary
 - (b) make notes
 - (c) get information

5. Listen to a sentence in order to re-arrange the elements to get a different effect.

“The twigs snapped and cracked and suddenly a huge bear appeared from the underbrush.”

“Snap! Crack! went the twigs. All at once from the underbrush appeared a huge bear.”

6. Listen to a poem:

- a. to discover the rhythm.
- b. to discover poetic effects, e.g. the shining words in “Shining Things” (Young Explorers, page 56).

7. Listen to a story to pick out exciting parts for illustrating.

8. Listen to an arithmetic problem read by the teacher. Give back the substance of the problem.

9. Listen to a radio program in order to:

- (a) take part in a discussion
- (b) make notes
- (c) make an illustration
- (d) write a report

10. Listen, during a phonics lesson, for words:

- (a) which begin alike
- (b) which rhyme
- (c) which have a central vowel change
- (d) which do not belong in a series,
e.g. milk, town, my, may.

11. Listen to music to determine what the composer had in mind,
e.g. “Amaryllis” suggests tip-toe rhythm.

12. Listen by an open window. See how many sounds can be identified.

C. TEACHING PUPILS TO OBSERVE

L

Keen observation is essential if children are to gain full benefits from experience. Description, clear explanation, and reports on such things as natural phenomena depend, for their effectiveness, on the ability to observe keenly and discriminatingly. Therefore, it becomes necessary to train the pupils' powers of observation.

I. *Description*

It is usually easier to describe than to explain as order is not as highly important. In describing a lost coat it is not essential that you begin with the color or a description of the material. It is essential that the child finishes one aspect before beginning another.

Descriptions fall mainly into three classes:

1. Those which create a mental picture for the reader or listener, e.g. A lost kitten must be described so well that it can readily be recognized by the finder.
2. Those that emphasize similarities as in a comparison, e.g. "The lost kitten is black and white like Billy's dog and about half as big."
3. Those which emphasize differences as in a contrast, e.g. "My kitten has long fur, but Mary's kitten has short fur."

Children have many needs for describing things and to do this well they must observe carefully. Some things children may wish to describe are:

1. Pets, toys, clothing.
2. Flowers, birds, trees, new farm babies.
3. Books, movies, pieces of music.
4. His house to an intended visitor.
5. A new combine or tractor.
6. The man who came to see Daddy.

II. *Explanation*

Explanation is more difficult than description. It requires observation of what was done and in what order or manner it was done.

Children have many occasions for giving explanations. A child may wish to explain such things as:

1. An experiment he has observed.
2. How the farmer dehorned a calf.
3. How a set of lights regulates traffic.
4. The differences and similarities in handling ice and roller skates.
5. A game to a new player.

III. *Reporting*

Careful observation plays an important part in reporting on topics based on nature. A few examples are:

1. Weather.
2. Seasonal changes in animals or birds.
3. Plant growth.
4. Life history of frogs and insects.

Ideas to Sharpen the Power of Observation

1. Show a picture of a child or have a child stand in front of the class for a short time. Remove the picture or send the child from the room. Leave the door open so that the child can enjoy the answers given by his classmates. Ask the children to describe the child or answer questions such as:

What color were his eyes?
Which hand held the book?

Avoid calling attention to details which might prove embarrassing.

Never choose a child who has a defect or is unkempt.

2. Show a picture, for a short time, of two or three buildings, boys, dogs, etc. Have the children compare them.
3. Show a picture of scenery. After the picture is removed have the children note relative locations, kinds of trees, and other features.
4. Show a picture with action in it. By observing carefully, have the children tell what might have happened before and after.
5. Send a child from the room. Change the position of an article. The child returns and tries to identify the article. Use this device as a short break between long periods of written work.
6. Encourage the children to observe the weather regularly.

A. TEACHING PUPILS TO THINK

a. *Introduction*

Children have learned to think long before they come to school. Some have become quite skilful in effective thinking, others depend upon parents, teachers or other persons, to think for them. TO HELP CHILDREN TO THINK BETTER is one of the most frequently stated purposes of the school. Thinking is not a skill that is developed in connection with any one subject and disregarded in others. It should be developed in connection with all subjects. It is important that all classrooms provide a stimulating environment. When children are continually challenged with questions and perplexities that require new information and the necessity of arriving at new conclusions to be tested by experience, they are in a situation that stimulates thought.

b. *How the Teacher Can Assist Pupils to Think*

1. A problem: Thinking begins with the recognition of a problem which is of concern and interest to the pupils. After the problem is recognized then it must be defined and limited to the point where it is within the pupils' understanding and ability to deal with. While the teacher may propose the problem, it must be accepted by the pupil as of interest to him, if it is to stimulate critical thinking.
2. First-hand experience: Once the problem has been defined then the student must accumulate information about the problem either vicariously or by first-hand experience. Teacher guidance is important to see that sources of information are available, and to see that experiences are relevant to the problem under study.
3. Organizing and Recording Observations: After information has been located its significance in relation to the problem must be evaluated. Pupils will also require guidance in determining the validity of material; facts must be recognized above opinion. Biased opinions should be recognized and discounted accordingly.

After the information has been gathered it should be organized into some pattern from which the conclusion(s) may be deduced.

4. Wide Participation: During group discussions pupils must be guided by the teacher so that she may check upon the relevance of comments. All children should feel free to contribute and should be trained to draw upon their knowledge and experience in contributing to the discussion.
5. Emotions and thinking: Children may be strongly influenced by particular experiences which they may have had, and their mood may block them from thinking constructively. The teacher should recognize such blocks to effective thinking and exercise some care in moving children quickly from one mood to another.
6. Drawing Conclusions: This is the most important part of the thinking process. As the learner considers the relationships and

inferences which are apparent from the data, a defensible conclusion may become apparent. Before the student accepts the conclusion he must test his hypothesis to see that it is practical and acceptable. The teacher will play an important part by offering just enough guidance and suggestion so that all factors in the data are given consideration.

c. *Dynamic View of Critical Thinking*

The Gestalt viewpoint does not accept the somewhat static steps in critical thinking as outlined above. Rather it is believed that thinking is a continuous, dynamic process in which re-orientation and re-direction of the whole problem is continually taking place. (See page 60-61 of Bulletin 2).

d. *Causes for Errors in Thinking*

1. Emotional Upset: This often prevents a child from thinking rationally about a topic. Other psychological blocks, or poor health, may prevent a child from thinking effectively about some problem.
2. Inappropriate questions: Questions not suited to the intellectual or educational level of the child may be another reason for poor thinking.
3. Faulty Language Comprehension: This may lead to an incorrect concept of the problem being studied.
4. Wishes and Prejudices: It may not be desirable to remove likes and dislikes, but pupils should be encouraged not to allow these to influence their thinking.

e. *Implications for Teachers of Language*

1. The essence of good language is clear thinking. Therefore teachers of language must make sure that pupils can organize their knowledge into clear, lucid thoughts, and can express such thoughts adequately.
2. Word symbols are essential to thinking. Therefore teachers must ensure that pupils have an adequate vocabulary, and an understanding of words, which will allow them to think accurately.

f. *Thinking and the Language Arts*

There is a danger that language teaching may become a dull and mechanical procedure involving only the teaching of grammatical rules, word usage, and the practice of language activities such as telephoning, listening to the radio, writing a business letter, etc. True, these may involve the use of language but they do not develop the art of using language effectively unless emphasis is placed upon:

1. The Art of Making Sense: The three requirements for making sense are:
 - a. Word order
 - b. Word form
 - c. Reference to human experience in the world as we know it.

Word order is most important. For example, the sentence "The robin sitting on the building with a bright red breast fell down," does not communicate the meaning intended. Word form is least important. "Me and him was there," contains three errors in word form but does express writer's idea. The form, order and pattern of a sentence may be impeccable but if it does not make sense it is not effective. For example, a sentence such as "The firmly embedded stone gathered speed as it rolled up the steep cliff until it came to a slow stop at the foot of the mountain," has good form order and pattern but it doesn't make sense. This is the most difficult of the three requirements to teach because it involves effective critical thinking.

2. The Art of Getting the Effect We are After: Language is intended to have certain effects on certain people. A sentence such as "Him and me done it" makes clear sense it is likely to give some listener feelings and opinions about the speaker that are not good because it is substandard English. Language should be useful in influencing action; by giving information, by stirring emotions, and by influencing attitudes. Grammar assists us in maintaining a suitable standard of sentence structure; and an adequate vocabulary is essential if we are to achieve fully the effects we wish to convey.

3. *The Art of Making Discriminations*

- a. In word usage; this implies an extensive vocabulary, with an understanding of the denotation and connotation of words.
- b. Between literal and metaphorical language. This implies the ability to recognize and interpret metaphors.
- c. Between kinds of statements.
- d. Between kinds of questions.
- e. Between degrees of generalizations, e.g. "Long books are dull" is a generalization. Should it be an "all" generalization or a "some" generalization?
- f. Between abstractions and words that refer to picturable objects. For example, the definition of "school spirit" can come from realities in our experience as much as does a definition of a "chair" or "cow" and can be defined and understood and made clear in the same way.
- g. Between tones of voice and their analogous tones in written discourse.

If the above aspects of language are taught, then grammar, vocabulary, and language activities become useful adjuncts but not an end in themselves. Pupils should be taught to control language so that experience (reality as it is known to us) is not mutilated in its precarious passage through words.

B. VOCABULARY

Words have tremendous power. They affect our efficiency as individuals and as groups. The use and understanding of them are often the difference between success and failure in any undertaking. They either limit or enhance the quality of a person's thinking. The maintenance and the development of an effective democratic society is one of the basic functions of an educational system. As words have different meanings for different individuals, misunderstanding arises easily and we are unable to communicate clearly our thoughts and feelings. As a result harmonious working together becomes very difficult. Today, we are asked to form intelligent opinions and make decisions on many important issues. To evaluate the information which deluges us and to communicate our convictions to others, demands an exact knowledge of the meaning and use of words.

The school has a vital contribution to make, for research regarding the vocabulary attainment of students indicates that an increased emphasis and awareness of the meaning of words would be beneficial and that the special vocabulary of each subject field must be mastered if students are to proceed with understanding. Also that vocabulary development is in the main influenced by four factors:

1. Experience—that is, if a student has travelled widely, has had many associations with people and places, coupled with opportunities to talk about them, the size of his vocabulary and his understanding of words will grow in direct proportion to those experiences.
2. The intellectual maturity of a student dictates what he takes from a given set of experiences.
3. Special interests of a student give him additional vocabulary in those fields provided, of course, that the student has an opportunity to develop his special interests.
4. A guided educational program which pays sufficient attention to vocabulary development, which continually broadens the experiences of a student, which gives him the opportunity to develop depth of word meaning, can make a substantial contribution to the size and effectiveness of the vocabulary of that person.

The four major factors of vocabulary development have obvious implications for the schools. Although what can be done in regard to mental maturity is very limited, the school can certainly provide wide and varied real experiences in the form of excursions, experiments and contacts with concrete objects. Furthermore, the vicarious experiences of students can be extended greatly through free reading and suggested research. In addition, time must be provided for the student to write and talk about the experiences if we wish the words to become part of his working vocabulary.

Perhaps it is in the content fields that vocabulary development is taken for granted. Too often the lesson reaches only part of the class, and the assigned reading brings little information to a considerable part of the class. Each content field must have its own well-developed vocabulary program, with thorough periodic checks on the depth of meaning and the meaning field that each student has built around the new words. In addition, a good program should encourage children to be aware of and interested in new words. A student must learn that

the study of new words can be fascinating. The school can do much to develop this attitude.

How Words Acquire Meaning

A small child attaches a word symbol to a concrete object. The meaning field around the symbol increases as his experiences with that object vary. As the child acquires efficiency in language the meaning may be enlarged, enriched, and new meanings added. Later, the vicarious experiences of reading can add meaning to familiar words and give meaning to new words. To make these new words a part of his working language a student needs an opportunity to verbalize his experiences.

Research Findings Which May Have Some Bearing on a Vocabulary Program

We have become increasingly aware that students have an understanding, reading, speaking and writing vocabulary. To develop any one of these demands that students have many and varied experiences, in listening, reading, speaking and writing.

The language ability of girls develops more quickly than boys. At the elementary school level girls will achieve better than boys of equal ability in language.

The six-year-old has a speaking vocabulary of 2,500 words at least, and understands the basic meaning of 17,000 additional words, plus 7,000 derivatives of these words. The student's increasing maturity and his experiences at school cause a very rapid vocabulary growth. Thus an eight-year-old has a speaking vocabulary of 7,500 words, a basic meaning vocabulary of 26,000 words, plus 18,000 derivatives of the words. The vocabulary of younger students is much greater than generally realized and the growth potential is tremendous.

Guideposts of a Good Vocabulary Program

- (a) Motivate pupils to become aware of strange words.
- (b) Provide opportunities for students to verbalize experiences and to use new words that they have learned.
- (c) Make the pupils responsible for presenting and explaining new words.
- (d) Encourage pupils to keep a record of new words, new use of familiar words.
- (e) Make children aware that the length or newness of a word doesn't make it more valuable. It has value only for its exact meaning.

Some Don'ts

- (a) Do not use vocabulary lists, games and isolated drill.
- (b) Do not introduce too many words too fast, as the depth of word meaning is often more important than a superficial knowledge of many words.

SPEECH TRAINING

(1) Speech is for others to hear:

Speech, which is pleasant and easily understood by others, is important not only because of its social significance, but also because clear articulation and a well-trained ear are important factors in all facets of a Language Arts program.

(2) Speech is important:

Speech is often thought to be a circular response: we have something to communicate we speak; we look for a response (visible and/or audible) to see if our idea has been understood, accepted or rejected. Our desire to communicate will not be satisfied if a response does not come from the listener. If this "return" is to result, the classroom should become a laboratory wherein the everyday use of speech in all subjects aids and discovers the general and particular speech needs of the class. Pupils and teacher participating in various speech activities are constantly faced with the problem of being clearly understood.

Following are a number of language activities of an informal type:

1. conversations
2. telephoning
3. making introductions
4. interviewing visitors or fellow pupils
5. giving directions
6. making impromptu or prepared reports
7. discussions
8. conducting a meeting
9. listening

Together with these are other, more formal language activities, taught especially for individual or group enjoyment:

1. story telling
2. oral reading
3. choral speaking
4. reciting poetry
5. dramatics

(3) Discovering difficulties:

Casual, alert observations by the teacher will result in recognition of those children whose speech deviates from the normal pattern because of certain:

1. organic defects
 - cleft palate
 - tongue tie
 - delayed speech
2. emotional disorders
 - stammering
 - stuttering
 - neurotic lisping

(These, and other similar defects, require more individual attention than can be given in the regular classroom and should be referred to a specialist in the field of speech therapy.)

3. functional defects

- defective phonation (incorrect production of sound)
- articulation
- enunciation
- pronunciation
- careless speech
- omissions
- substitutions
- foreign accent

These may not be so apparent. Consequently a speech survey, to determine the sounds which are defective, should occur early in the school year. Following this diagnosis a school program will be established to correct the functional speech impediments discovered in the survey. A number of excellent speech surveys are available* or the teacher may compose her own.

At times the survey may be most revealing when it includes the whole school in order to single out a general defect. For example, many schools may have a large number of children coming from non-English homes. These children have a marked foreign accent and require concentrated training for a period of time. In such a case, the speech training program will be corrective but it must also aim at the development of a well-modulated voice, clear-cut enunciation, and pleasant rhythmic speech.

(4) The speech lesson:

Speech lessons should include exercises for:

- A. Relaxation—a period conducive to physical and mental stillness.
- B. Body—appropriate movement and correct posture.
- C. Exercises directed toward the particular speech correction needed by the class.
- D. Developmental and interpretive selections to allow practice and enjoyment.
- E. Frequent evaluation and planning by pupils and teacher.

(5) The basic elements of a speech program together with typical sample exercises suitable to implement the program:

A. Relaxation

- (a) Flowers in the wind: droop heads to right, droop heads to left, sway body to right, sway to left.
- (b) Trees in a forest: raise hands limply above head, sway in the wind, let arms drop lightly and slowly to side.
- (c) Be a rag doll: drop quietly to floor.
- (d) Pretend to be any toy or animal tip-toeing and falling off to sleep.
- (e) From a standing position bend forward, etc., (page 3, *Speech Explorers*, 1957.)
- (f) To relax the throat (p. 4, *Speech Explorers*, 1956).

* Webster Speech Correction Guide, Webster Publishing Co., St. Louis 3, Missouri (free).

B. Body

1. Correct posture

- (a) Stand tall. Stand with spine straight, head correct, chin parallel to floor, shoulders relaxed, knees neither bent nor stiffened, feet firmly on floor—slightly apart.
- (b) Sit tall.
- (c) Be birds or airplanes. Stretch arms sideways at shoulder level, fingers extended, palm-downwards, loosen chin—begin to rise—on toes—fly (running on tip-toe) skim the ground and trees. Now come down easily, lower heels slowly, gently lower wings.
- (d) Walk with book on head.

2. Movement—The body speaks as well as the voice (an aid to relaxation) helps develop grace, appropriate gesture and facial expression.

- (a) Have the class prepare a pantomime on nursery rhyme or character in a story from the reading activities. Pupils and teacher discuss and decide upon actions, gestures, mannerisms which will bring character to life.
- (b) Suitable rhythmic actions may be set to a jingle, poem or part of a story or to music.
- (c) Choose character of a story and enact appropriate actions, e.g.:

Peter Pan asleep underground
—awakened by Tink
—learns of Wendy's capture
—rushes to the rescue

Aladdin
—surprise
—fear
—amazement ,etc.
—happiness

- (d) To appreciate change of pace (p. 4, Speech Explorers, 1957).

C. Voice—Technique of voice production

1. Breathing—(the proper control of the air stream).

- (a) Pretend to blow out birthday candles: baby's cake, your cake, Grandfather's cake, Alberta 50-year Jubilee cake, etc.
- (b) Blow feather (real, imaginary) high, higher, highest. Keep it floating.
- (c) Pretend to be a chick-a-dee..... chick-a-dee-dee-dee-dee
Pretend to be steam engines s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s-s
Pretend to be the wind..... oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo
- (d) Take a deep breath and exhael on the sound of AH. Keep the pitch constant. Try this in different voices, medium, high, low.
- (e) Try the old favorite—"One by one we climbed the hill; and one by one and two by two we climbed the hill, etc."
- (f) See how many times you can repeat this laugh on the one breath—ha, ha ha; ho, ho, ho! he, he, he!

- (g) How far can you go in the following without taking a new breath:

A and B went round the world

A and B and C and D went round the world, etc.

2. Resonance—This gives body and individuality to the voice. Thin, small voices do not allow vowels to resound and reverberate.

- (a) For nasal resonance (sound m, n, ng)

(i) pretend to be bumble-bees - hum

(ii) jingles: Muddlesome, p. 217 Program of Studies 1942.
Christmas Bells, p 216 Programme of Studies 1942.

(iii) pretend to be tiny tops—hum high and light; then be big tops—hum in a lower and a deeper tone.

- (b) For oral resonance (vowel sounds)

(i) with rounded lips whisper vowel sounds—aw-oh-oo—keep lower jaw relaxed and throat open

(ii) be the wind oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo—rising and falling in pitch and volume

(iii) Cookery Book (page 216, C of S (A))

3. Flexibility of Speech Organs

- (a) Relaxing the jaw and opening the mouth

(i) make lips round and say 'oo'. Now draw lips back and say 'ee'; repeat oo-ee-oo-ee

(ii) say ah, oo, ee, oo, adding different consonants, e.g.
tah-too-tee-too
bah-boo-bee-bee

(iii) try these jingles-p. 7 Speech Explorers 1956 (2 of

(iv) for lip elasticity - 8 Speech Explorers 1956 (2 of them)

(v) Rhymes—Peter Peter

—Pussy Cat

—Baa Baa Black Sheep

—Hot Cross Buns

—Pop Corn Shop

- (b) Tongue agility

(i) roll the 'R's' with top of tongue—r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r

(ii) jingles, pages 9-10, 1956 Speech Explorers.

- (c) For strengthening the soft palate

(i) say k-g-k-g-k-g

(ii) jingles, page 11—1956 Speech Explorers

(iii) Rhymes—Three Little Kittens

—Little Miss Muffett

—Lucy Locket Lost Her Pocket

D. Speech—voice production

1. Diction (enunciation, articulation and pronunciation).

Enunciation of the vowels and diphthongs. Beauty of speech depends greatly upon the shaping of vowel sounds. Squeezed lazy vowels produce thin, unresonant (unpleasant) speech.

- (a) For vowel sounds oo-oo-oo-oo-oo-oo
- (b) For vowel sounds oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh
- (c) For vowel sounds ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah

Page 12 - 1956 Speech Explorers

- (d) For vowel sounds ay-ay-ay-ay-ay-ay
- (e) For vowel sounds ee-ee-ee-ee-ee-ee

Page 13 - 1956 Speech Explorers

- (f) More practice in vowel sounds—p 10 - 1957 Speech Explorers
- (g) Practice in diphthong sounds
 - “i” p. 14 - 1956
 - “ay” p. 14 - 1956

2. Articulation—is the grouping of vowels into words through the use of consonants. Good enunciation makes for clarity of articulation.

Practice the consonants

— f	{	p 15 - 1956 Speech Explorers
— v		
— th		
— w	{	p 14 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— h		p 16 - 1956 Speech Explorers
		p 16 - 1956 Speech Explorers
		p 14 - 1957 Speech Explorers
		p 13 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— r		
— d		p 14 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— t		p 13 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— s-z		p 18 - 1956 Speech Explorers
— z		p 15 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— m-n-p		p 13 - 1957 Speech Explorers
— p		p. 217—Popcorn Shop—Programme of Studies, 1942.
— b		p. 216—Bubble Blowers — Programme of Studies, 1942.

3. Pronunciation is the correct grouping of accented and unaccented syllables in accordance with the standards of acceptable English. Check your pronunciation lists from p. 17 - 1957, Speech Explorers.

4. Expressiveness—The enthusiasm with which we speak.

- (a) Pace—a variety in pace adds to the effectiveness of one's speech. Emphasis is gained through the variation in tempo—certain feelings or attitudes are implied by certain types of pace. e.g. anger—increase; reverence—decrease .
- (b) Pause and phrasing - p. 19 - 1957 Speech Explorers.
- (c) Pitch and Volume—

Pitch refers to the note on a musical scale. Our voices play on this scale to express our thoughts. A recurrent

pitch pattern with unvaried tones spells monotony. Volume is the loudness or softness in speech. This, again, helps convey thoughts and feelings. Varying the volume implies certain respective meanings: e.g.

Increased volume—anger, command
Decreased volume—secrecy, intimacy

- (i) Repeat suitable practice selections and jingles mentioned in other sections above, e.g.
Old King Cole
Water, Water
The rain is raining
- (ii) Try some of the other jingles in the same way,—first in medium speaking voice, then at a higher pitch and finally at a pitch lower than your medium speaking level, e.g. Whiskey Frisky p. 22-1956, Speech Explorers.
- (iii) Choose story - p. 20 - 1957 Speech Explorers
- (iv) Relate to all other reading activities and recitation during daily work.

5. Inflection—This is important in narration and dramatic presentation to provide emphasis. The emphasis upon certain words or phrases alters the meaning. A downward inflection usually indicates completeness of a thought, blindness or anger.

An upward inflection usually indicates uncertainty, doubt, courtesy or sometimes joy.

- (i) Try these sentences with different effects:
Where are you going?
Where are you going and what do you wish?
Close the door when you leave.
- (ii) Page 22 - 1957, Speech Explorers. Read the following
- (iii) By varying inflections p. 22, 1957 Speech Explorers.

6. Mood—is the tone color which conveys emotion and moves the listener.

- (i) Try saying 'cold old house' in different moods—mysterious, happy, sad
- (ii) From a story sentences which create different moods or feelings, e.g. Three Billy Goats Gruff
- (iii) Look for short paragraphs or selections which express different moods. Read them to the class — Discuss what mood or feeling best suits the selection. When you begin a new selection:
 - consider the mood
 - look for descriptive, colorful or unusual words
 - discuss the meaning
 - apply what you have learned about voice production, diction and expressiveness which will help convey the intended meaning and create a suitable mood.

7. Interpretation—In studying a selection poetry or prose , try to develop the imagination by:

- considering the mood, feeling and meaning of the poem.
- picturing the story the author is trying to tell.
- discovering the meanings of unfamiliar words or terms.
- discovering, if possible, facts about the author which will further create interest and enrich the selection.

- (i) Poetry—Suitable selections from Reading Series
—Time for poetry—Arbuthnot

- (ii) Prose—Narrative, e.g. Gingerbread
Heidi
Peter Pan
—Fables—Town Mouse and Country Mouse
—Folk Tales—Little Red Reding Hood
The Frog Prince
—Nature Stories—Bambi

8. Drama

Creative—Dramatize any story studied which the class has enjoyed

- Selections from Reading Programs
- Enterprise activities

Learned—e.g. Peter Pan

Methods of Interpreting Selections

Evaluation—Look and Listen

Ask the following questions:

- was the speaker relaxed?
- was the posture correct?
- when required—were the gestures and movement adequate?
- was the facial expression in accordance with the selection?
- was the breathing correct?
- was there sufficient resonance?
- could the voice be easily heard?
- could the speaker be readily understood?
- was the diction good?
- was there sufficient expressiveness (variety of pace, pitch, etc.)
- was the vocal quality pleasant? (rich, melodious, free from harshness, nasality)

Methods of Interpreting Selections Chosen:

- (1) Choral Speaking—An effective phrase of oral expression is choral speaking, an activity in which a group is trained to interpret prose or poetry as one voice. Types: refrain, antiphonal, cumulative, groups, unison.
Material: Choose poetry from selections en-

joyed by class if not too personal in content (not "I" but rather "we").

Prose selections should be a choice of interesting or exciting sections of longer stories.

- (2) Individual Interpretation (poetry)—Pupils often volunteer to recite a poem or selection learned in Choral Speaking.
- (3) Discussion (and conversation)—class discuss which story to dramatize, number of characters, their characteristics, age, moods, feelings.
Discuss a dramatization or a study project.
Discuss rules for conversation. Dramatize a telephone conversation.
- (4) Reading Aloud and Story Telling—Children read and interpret conversation according to character in story.
Relate a story enjoyed as individual or as a group (personal incident in life, pets).
Read a story to the class for enjoyment. Retell a story previously read.
- (5) Dramatization: As a medium of self expression dramatization is an important phase of language. The value of dramatic expression lies not so much in the finished product as in the educative changes that it effects in:
 - (a) stimulating pupil initiative, resourcefulness and ingenuity
 - (b) developing poise, self control and confidence
 - (c) making the pupil conscious of the beauty and power of oral language

Forms of dramatization:

- (a) Dramatic readings of bits of conversation selected from reading materials. Discuss characterization, e.g. What Father Bear was like, his actions, his voice, before attempting to dramatize story or poem. Check the basic elements (body, voice, etc.) as play progresses.
- (b) Pantomimes, shadow plays of action, situation or character. Simplicity of pantomime or shadow play stimulates natural spontaneous expression. This type of dramatization is very suitable as part of Enterprise and reading activities in all elementary grades, e.g. Grade I, II, III: Community workers, doctor, fireman. Grade IV: Pioneer Life in Alberta, R.C.M.P., etc.
- (c) Puppet Plays: Pupils who are inclined to be self conscious in an audience situation often forget themselves in a puppet or marionette show; e.g. vegetable parade, Columbus' three voyages or three ships.

For a number of years the Speech Explorers program, prepared by Alberta School Broadcasts, has done much to improve speech in Alberta schools. Teachers and pupils have benefited greatly from this program and it is hoped that as years go by, all schools in Alberta will listen to *Speech Explorers*. L

A. Practical Writing

1. Procedure

(1) Definition

Practical writing includes that body of writing which the student writes for the purpose of communicating information. It will include such items as reports, paragraphs, charts, and longer essays dealing with many topics from the various subject fields.

(2) Setting or Motivation

Children do good writing when they write for a purpose. Motivation for writing is provided by the need for expression in such subjects as Enterprise, health and science.

(3) Experience

Before a class is asked to write on a topic the teacher should make certain that each pupil has the experience involved in gaining a wide fund of knowledge on the topic. This implies carefully directed preparation; reading, films, excursions, resource persons, and any other sources of information available to the class. If necessary direct teaching may be used to build up the knowledge.

(4) Discussion

Discussion with the class serves three important purposes:

- (a) Planning: After information has been collected, the pupils may require some assistance in organizing and planning the writing to be done about the topic. For example, class discussion may determine what should be said in a letter written to ask a factory manager for permission to visit the factory as a Enterprise excursion. Many ideas should come from the class through discussion: essential content which has been omitted should be suggested by the teacher.
- (b) Building Vocabulary: The teacher must emphasize the need of using words which best convey the meaning desired. Pupils will have encountered new words in their reading and study. Oral expression will allow the children to gain facility in the use of these new words, and will enlarge their meaning. Discussion will make new words familiar tools ready to be used in writing. If discussion does not make all new words meaningful, then the use of dictionaries and other source books should be encouraged as a supplement. Vague words should be stressed.
- (c) Setting standards: Before the students are asked to do any actual writing the class under the direction of the teacher should establish a standard for their writing. This should be done in class discussion in which the teacher obtains from the students the desired standards and writes them on the black-

board where they are available to the students as they work on their assignments. The list may be copied on a chart to be permanently available for writing and pupil evaluation. The list of standards will grow as writing improves. The number of standards stressed at any one time should be limited. Too many at one time discourage the student. Four types of standards may be discussed and listed:

- standards relating to the mechanics of writing,
e.g. punctuation, indentation, neatness and legibility
of writing, etc.
- standards relating to content
- standards relating to vocabulary, e.g. the use
of exact, colorful words
- standards relating to sentence structure.

(5) Writing

The actual writing should be done under supervision, that is, the teacher should be present and available to assist individual pupils with their problems.

(6) Pupil Evaluation

The list of standards mentioned above may now be used for pupil evaluation, providing the child with a set of criteria by which to evaluate his or another child's work. More information on the techniques of editing or evaluating will be found in another section.

2. Reports

(1) Definition

By the time the average pupil has completed Grade VI he should be competent and independent in the basic skills of report making. That is, with little help he should be capable of:

- a. finding,
- b. organizing,
- c. writing, and
- d. orally presenting

material on a topic in an interesting and informative manner, individually and as a member of a democratic group. Reporting should develop as a natural outgrowth of the need to communicate information within the rich, highly-motivated subject matter of Enterprise.

(2) The Beginnings of Reporting

Reporting begins in the early days of Grade One as informal, individual contributions to classroom experience. As an example of how mothers occupy their time a little girl may tell spontaneously about how her mother bakes a cake. Her report will be very short but it will be purposeful.

Reports are often centered around illustrative material in these early stages. A group has a common experience, such as reading a story or seeing a film, and perhaps draws a picture about it. Each child gives his report when he tells the class or the teacher about his picture.

Resource materials are rarely used independently but often by groups guided by the teacher. A class may talk about a picture brought by one of its members or discuss something seen on T.V. Superior students, however, may begin by the end of Grade One to do very limited research involving pictures and resource persons.

(3) The Use of Resource Materials

At the beginning of reporting all necessary information is provided through common experiences. As the child gains skill in reporting the amount of common experience is decreased until in Grade Six he is provided with only enough experience-intake to motivate his research and writing and to give background for planning. Most of the information has to be found independently.

Careful planning must be stressed when a child begins to find information for himself. A background of information is provided through films, discussion, formal lessons, to mention a few, which should be supplemented by the child's own reading. This background of information makes possible good and realistic planning by the child of his group. The planning should be detailed and

specific when children lack skill in research. If children know exactly what they want to find in a book there will be little temptation to include extraneous matter or to copy from the book. Questions perhaps focus a child's attention more directly upon what is wanted than do sub-topics. Children can do much of the planning themselves but the teacher must ensure adequate planning before research begins. The outline that follows is an actual plan of a report written by an Enterprise group in Grade Four:

The House of the Congo

1. Where are the houses built?
2. What are the walls made of?
3. What is the roof made of?
4. What are the floors made of?
5. How big are the doors?
6. How big are the windows?
7. What tools are used to make the house?
8. How big are the houses?
9. Do the houses have furniture in them?
10. Do the houses have stoves in them?
11. How are the animals and insects kept out?

The answer to these questions were found by members of the group and were made into a report.

(4) Teaching Reporting Skills

McKee in his pamphlet *Reports* lists the following reporting skills:

- (a) Choosing a subject for a report.
- (b) Keeping to the subject.
- (c) Telling enough in a report.
- (d) Telling things in the right order.
- (e) Gathering information on a subject.
- (f) Making notes.
- (g) Organizing notes into paragraphs.
- (h) Outlining a report.
- (i) Using the dictionary to improve reports.
- (j) Using illustrative materials.
- (k) Reporting accurately.
- (l) Checking the accuracy of printed statements.

These are all skills which must be mastered by pupils.

Some of these skills can be discovered by the children as reporting progresses; others can be taught indirectly by praising good work or through incidental mention; and still others will become the subjects for formal lessons. All of them should be associated as closely as possible with an actual report-making situation. A skill should never be taught in isolation as an end in itself.

The logical time to teach children how to choose a subject for a report occurs when an Enterprise group, for example, is having difficulty choosing a good subject. A discussion within the group, with the teacher as an unofficial member, should clear up the difficulty. If the teacher believes the difficulty affects most of the

class, the discussion will include the whole class. Children often discover how to improve the choice of subject in discussing a report already given: "good" subjects are praised and poor ones are examined by everyone to see why they are poor and how they could be improved.

Class evaluation of a report will usually reveal such weaknesses as a failure to tell enough in a report and telling things in the wrong order. Some of the skills involved in gathering information should be taught by the teacher at the approximate time. *The index*, for example, will have real meaning for children if its use is taught when they are eager to find information but lack the skill. A complete understanding of all the information available in the index can be discovered after its general organization and basic uses have been taught.

Making notes is a difficult skill to master and requires much practice before competence results. A specific question helps focus the child's attention on what is required, in the beginning of note making.

The next step is a sub-topic with pupils being encouraged to rephrase it as a question. Finally, the usual sub-topic form.

- E.g. 1. Do the houses have furniture in them?
2. —furniture (Do the houses have furniture in them?)
3. —furniture.

Many other skills are required in reporting. *Summarizing*, for example, is useful when an oral report is to be given. Children should be encouraged to use the dictionary to value precise, meaningful words in reports. Pupils should continually check their own and others' statements for accuracy.

These and other skills have not been dealt with in detail so perhaps three principles may be listed which govern the teaching of all reporting skills.

1. Teaching skills when they are needed and in as close association with reporting as possible.
2. Allow children to discover skills, in class discussion and through pupil evaluation, when discovery is not too wasteful of time and effort. Discovery is usually practical when children have a good background of knowledge leading up to the new skill.
3. Practice and maintenance of skills should always be through needed research and writing.

(5) Oral and Written Reports.

The planning and research that precedes reporting is usually followed by written expression. Sometimes report making ends with the written report and the accompanying illustrative material, such as pictures, models and charts, are put on display.

Usually the written report is summarized and presented orally. The summary should be brief and while pupils are encouraged to practice giving their reports, they should not be memorized. Usual-

ly pupils are allowed to refer to a brief summary while giving the report.

(6) Preparing Reports in Groups

Certain of the activities involved in report-making may be carried on effectively by a small group. These activities include the planning and evaluation which take place at intervals through the report-making period. One possible schedule for preparing a report in a group follows.

(A) Finding the information

- i. After a background of knowledge has been established by discussion, formal lessons, pupil reading, etc., the group chooses a topic for the report.
- ii. The group working together decides on a list of questions the report should answer.
- iii. Each member assumes responsibility for a number of questions.
- iv. The pupils work individually to find the answers to the questions.
- v. The group re-assembles to evaluate the answers to the questions. Poorly answered questions are assigned again, that is, steps iii, iv, and v are repeated until answers satisfactory to the group are the result.

(B) Writing the Report

- i. The group discusses the organization of the report, grouping answers together into possible paragraph topics.
- ii. The answers are divided among the members of the group for writing into paragraphs.
- iii. The pupils work individually to write the report.
- iv. The paragraphs are edited and evaluated by the group. Unsatisfactory paragraphs are divided again, that is, steps ii, iii, and iv are repeated until a report satisfactory to the group is the result.
- v. The group decides on a title for the report.

(6) Illustrative Material

Illustrative material is prepared following similar procedure to that followed when finding the information and writing the report: planning, working, and evaluating.

(D) Oral Reports

When an oral report is presented it should be given co-operatively by the group. Each child may present one part of the report in the same way that each found part of the information and wrote part of the report. The group should edit and help improve each child's part before the report is presented to the class.

(7) Follow-up Activities For Reports

Reports should always be discussed and evaluated by the class in respect to content and presentation. Much valuable knowledge and insight into reporting is gained in this way. A good teacher will take care that the evaluation proceeds along objective and constructive lines (see page 44 for a suggestion as to techniques). Usually it is desirable that each child have a record of the information in a report. Such a record should be individual since individual records motivate careful listening when reports are being given and have more meaning to pupils. Here are a number of suggestions:

1. After the report is given the pupil or group giving the report may copy the summary used in presenting the report on the blackboard. Each child will then write the report in his notebook.
2. Before the report is given the class may decide on a list of questions the report should answer. These questions are listed on the blackboard and make listening purposeful. After hearing the report the class will discuss the answers to the questions. Unanswered questions will either be erased or answered by teacher or pupils if important. Then each pupil will answer the questions in his notebook. Superior members of the class may be asked to organize the answers into paragraphs. This extra challenge provides valuable enrichment.

WHEN YOU TEACH LANGUAGE:

Do you make assignments carefully, using examples?

Do you make sure most of the class understands the assignment before the class begins work?

Does the whole class have to wait while you explain to a pupil who doesn't understand?

Do you walk around the class to see that everyone has a good start?

Do you read current articles about the teaching of language?

Are you acquainted with the latest language references?

Do research findings help you plan your language lessons?

3. Charts

(1) Definition

The charts referred to here are the result of group experiences. Their utility may end with the experience; for example, summarizing a group discussion as it progresses helps promote logical thinking and makes discussion seem important and purposeful. Most charts are made primarily for their future usefulness. Through charts developed out of group experiences the beginning Grade One pupil takes the first steps in matching words and phrases, moving his eyes from left to right, recognizing certain words as he sees them in new situations. These skills he employs in his first reading from books.

Charts may also represent a composite of individual experiences, but even these charts are initiated by group discussion. An enterprise vocabulary chart, for example, may be added to by individuals or by small groups after its purpose is made clear in class discussion.

Charts are used most frequently in the primary grades but are useful devices at all levels of elementary school. They may be printed or written on the blackboard and/or on large sheets of paper. Pictures may be the medium of expression in early chart-making and later pictures may illustrate a chart's brief statements.

(2) Use of Charts

A. Values in Making Charts

The task of composing a chart, as a co-operative undertaking, has value in itself. The discussion which accompanies the addition of each item is experience in purposeful oral expression. Courtesy must be practised as an interchange of opinion takes place. Class members taking part in the discussion must exercise great ingenuity in summarizing. Most important of all, the demands of chart-making force pupils to think logically and to express themselves clearly and concisely.

Thus the demands of chart composition mean that chart-making is often an end in itself. For example, an enterprise class may go on an excursion and a record of what the pupils learned may be made on an experience chart as a follow-up activity. Making the chart will, first of all, recall to each pupil what he learned; secondly, attention will be focussed on the important details of the excursion, i.e., each detail will be put in perspective; and finally the chart preserves the experience for future reference.

Chart-making facilitates the development of discussion by recording its progress. A science class, for example, may discuss the plants and fish in an aquarium in an attempt to discover how they are interdependent. Many seemingly small bits of information must be contributed before the evidence points to interdependence.

Fact is built on fact according to the principles of scientific thinking so that a record of the thinking as it progresses outlines the pattern of thought and suggests further evidence.

There are thus many values inherent in the class composition of a chart. For these values to result, careful teacher-planning is a prerequisite to chart-making. A teacher's pre-plan of a chart enables the teacher to evaluate quickly each contribution made by the class and so provide sensitive direction to the discussion. Just as making a chart assists pupils to think logically, the existence of a teacher's pre-plan of the chart means better teaching because of the careful planning and thorough thinking that the pre-plan necessitates.

B. Particular Uses of Charts

Mention has been made of the reading charts in Grade One which record a class experience and provide practice in reading. All charts give reading practice particularly for pupils requiring remedial work and for non-English pupils needing special reading instruction. Charts are indicated in the reading program whenever brief material, not readily available to the children, is to be used by a number of pupils at the same time. Charts provide an abundance of vital reading experience at little or no cost.

In a similar manner enterprise resources may be expanded through the use of charts. Recently a Grade Four class, wishing to start an enterprise on Mexico, was faced with a shortage of resource material. During the initiation of the enterprise each pupil was encouraged to note all facts, concepts and generalizations that he encountered. Later these were discussed and made into charts. The charts effectively supplemented the books, films and pictures at the disposal of the class.

Vocabulary may be made available in chart form. A Grade Six class was interested in fish after reading "Sockeye" in "All Sails Set". The pupils were stimulated to do much reading and investigation. The teacher capitalized on their interest by suggesting that a number of reports could be written about salmon and a model could be made of the various types of salmon, of a fish ladder and a salmon trap. The vocabulary was difficult so the teacher suggested that each pupil might note all difficult words about salmon. These words were discussed and listed on a chart to be available for reference. Many new words were added to the pupils' vocabulary and the children were encouraged to use the new words since they were readily available.

Salmon

spawn
fry
parr
smolt
grilse

gill net
salmon trap
jigger
hook
heart
carbon dioxide

gill flap
pot
spiller
gill arch
oxygen

Good procedure is often the key to the successful completion of pupil activities. A class discussion, summarized on a chart, to plan the activity will often ensure its success. The proofreading charts for the business letter (page 54) are examples of charts which outline good procedure. Another example will illustrate the many ways in which charts that suggest good procedure may be used.

Small groups in a Grade Three class have trouble getting to work quickly and quietly during construction work in enterprise. The teacher decides that more planning will help and discusses with the class how to get work quickly and quietly. The following chart is the result of the discussion.

How We Get To Work

1. We wait till we are told to start work.
2. We move quickly to our table.
3. We move quietly to our table.
4. We wait for our chairman to start the planning.
5. We stay at our table unless we need something.
6. When we need something we ask one person to get it.

The items on the chart will be reviewed briefly at the beginning of each construction period until the groups do get to work quickly and quietly. At the end of a construction period each group will evaluate its own attempt at getting to work by an analysis of its own behavior in terms of the six items on the chart. The chart is flexible, that is, items may be changed, added or taken away as the need arises.

A chart is the ideal way to record activities so that the information is immediately available to the class. A class weather chart, kept up to date by a small committee, is of continuing interest. The activities of any group become of widespread concern when they can be followed on a chart.

Only a few of the many uses of charts have been mentioned. The summary that follows lists some of the other uses of charts according to subjects.

Arithmetic

- weights and measures
- money
- fractions
- generalizations

Enterprise

- planning
- evaluation
- records
- spelling
- vocabulary

Health

- rules

Language

- proofreading
- group story or poem
- spelling
- remedial reading
- non-English

Science

- planning
- records
- concepts

B. Personal Writing

Personal writing is done primarily for the sheer pleasure of doing it. It is often not scheduled but is done when a child has an urge to write. Personal writing has a real contribution to make to self-expression. It gives satisfaction to the author, who working in his own way has produced work of which he can approve and which is acceptable to others. This awareness and appreciation of his own powers tends to produce an effective, poised personality. In addition, the confidence in expression gained in personal writing has an observable carry-over to practical writing.

The Beginning—Story telling which is basic to story writing should begin in the primary grades. It is motivated by the teacher telling simple, original stories in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The children will enjoy these stories and with a little encouragement will soon suggest that they have stories to tell. This telling of stories furnishes the preliminary steps that eventually lead into the most mature techniques of story writing. Abundant experience in oral expression is very important in the development of ability to write. Story telling should continue through the grades. While it is particularly valuable as an introduction to writing, story telling is a legitimate creative activity in itself.

Writing stories is a natural impulse and a contagious one if, in the classroom, a tone conducive to this kind of work is established. The teacher, by her own anticipation and enjoyment, may motivate the children by sharing with them stories and poems written by other children, cf. *They All Want to Write*.^{*} She will try to create an atmosphere of relaxation and friendliness with leisure to visualize the story and relish it to the full. Together they chuckle over a humorous episode and reread a bit of lively action. There will be comments at the end of the story but it is essential that only appreciative ones should be allowed.

This period of reading stories should be continued until the children show a desire to write stories of their own. For some pupils two or three weeks will suffice; for others preparation moves more slowly. The whole process of motivation is of great importance. Each fall motivation should be carried on again. The group has to be drawn into the spirit of adventure and fun necessary to easy, happy writing.

When the time seems ripe the teacher may suggest that some of the pupils may want to write stories of their own. She explains that since these stories are just for themselves then spelling, writing and punctuation will be forgotten. No stigma is attached to not writing but acclaim given to those who make the venture.

Some pupils will find it very difficult to start writing. Sometimes the teacher may help by suggesting comic strip or T.V. characters and talking about one of their adventures. In the early stages of writing many children find writing easier if known characters are used. Sometimes, too, a child, slow to start writing, may be pleasantly surprised to read a story which he told the teacher. A tape recorder is helpful here.

Sharing Stories—Perhaps the best way to share stories in the beginning is to have the author read them to the class. This way is necessary since spelling, writing, and punctuation were made subservient to ideas. The teacher sets the atmosphere for such a period. Everyone is attentive and appreciative of all efforts. The author is commended by teacher and pupils when his stories show merit.

* *They All Want to Write*. Burrows, Prentiss-Hall, New York.

At this early stage of story writing the urge to write can easily be stifled. Praise, if excessive, may have inhibiting effects. It may oppress the sensitive child with the fear that he cannot again equal what he has already done. It may fix attention on a single story which the child may come to regard as a model and repeat again and again. Self-consciousness due to praise may cause a loss in the freshness and vigor of his writing. Criticism of the backward child may strengthen his conviction that he cannot do anything worthwhile. A concern with mechanics, such as spelling and punctuation, will limit the expression and inhibit ideas. Thus it is advisable to avoid these pitfalls and so increase enthusiasm for story telling.

The Improvement of Personal Writing—When story writing first begins and when it begins again at the commencement of each year, writing should be uninterrupted. Great benefit will result and show itself in all writing if the pupils learn to express themselves freely, without inhibition. Improvement will be noticed as a result of praise of good work and from the child's desire to write a better story to share with his friends.

The impetus for still further improvement must come from the pupils. This can happen in a number of ways. When writing is proceeding apace a child may want to know how to use quotation marks. Here is a golden opportunity for the teacher to invite those interested in quotation marks to gather quietly around a blackboard and discuss quotation marks.

Often children will want to share their stories in ways others than reading them to their friends. A child may want to put his story in the school or class paper and since others will read his story, standards of punctuation, spelling, and writing must be given attention. The story should be proof read and rewritten. A word of caution—the suggestion that the story be shared in a new way, proof-read, and rewritten must come from the author.

A useful device in improving story-writing techniques is to write a co-operative story. The teacher acts as secretary, the whole class or a group, as author. A skilful teacher may often lead children to discover important techniques. This method is valuable at all levels and particularly so in primary grades.

The last mentioned suggestions for improving personal writing must be introduced cautiously. Nothing must destroy the thrill and satisfaction of writing a story.

Since the term evaluation has already been defined (see page 11), we shall proceed to a consideration of evaluation as it applies to oral and written language.

1. Evaluation of Oral Language

Planned oral expression, such as oral reports, telephone conversations, and interviews, benefit from careful evaluation. For example, an enterprise group may decide to interview a resource person before the whole class. In preparation the group sets the objectives for the interview: the information they hope to get from the resource person; and the procedure they will follow consistent with good manners, and effective and correct expression. From the teacher's point of view the objectives will not be complete but, since they were developed in group discussion, the objectives will be a good measure of the pupils' knowledge at that time. Any serious omissions will be noted and will become the subject of a language lesson.

Many oral language activities take place in such a manner that a complete list of pupil objectives is neither possible nor desirable. Many class discussions, for example, have objectives known only to the teacher. The exchange of opinion in small groups, while being valuable practice in purposeful oral expression, is of a casual nature, making the formal listing of objectives too time consuming. Informal objectives, however, are in order, adding purpose and direction to all but the most casual oral language activity. At the beginning of a discussion period the teacher could well say, "How should we talk so that everyone can hear us?" At the end of the period she might say, "Did everyone talk so he could be heard?" Small groups should be encouraged to plan and evaluate briefly in every period. The teacher can help to encourage this procedure by asking a question at the end of a period after a small group has been discussing something. For example, "Did everyone stick to the point when they were talking today?"

Improvement in language ability may be gauged by the teacher not only in terms of performance but also by noting the objectives pupils set for themselves. As language ability improves so objectives become more and more exacting.

2. Evaluation of Written Language.

Writing must first of all be carefully planned, and written or implied objectives are a part of all planning. Planning may take the form of a class discussion, a group discussion, or individual effort.

After the writing is done the work should be edited or proof read according to class, group or individual standards (see page 32). Proof reading in the classroom involves a number of steps:

- A. Standards are set up by which writing may be judged. These standards may include such items as punctuation, capitalization, usage, content, ideas and so on. It is important that the standards be set by the pupils in discussion, since in this way those doing the proof reading, i.e., the pupils, will fully understand the standards.
- B. The writing is proof read, usually by those who did the writing. Proof reading is done one item at a time. Look for errors in punctuation, spelling and usage.
- C. With errors marked, re-writing takes place. The benefits of proof reading are many:

- teacher's marking time is greatly reduced
- since children take pride in finding their own errors, there is no stigma attached to mistakes.
- thoughtless errors are almost eliminated
- teacher evaluation is easier
- by examining their work critically children will gain knowledge of what constitutes good writing.

Teacher evaluation, that is, the examination of objectives to measure the degree to which they have been carried out, is much simplified by the self-evaluation or proof reading which precedes it. The teacher is sure that most errors made are the result of a lack of knowledge rather than carelessness. Thus errors, or ineffective expression, indicates a need for further teaching along very specific lines.

The teacher's objectives are usually set at the beginning of the year. With the testing in other subjects, a composition such as "Our Home" or "Fun After Four" is given to test the pupils' language ability. A careful analysis of these compositions will indicate the children's written language level and their needs. A language program may be planned accordingly. Further testing of the same sort plus an examination of daily writing will enable the teacher to measure progress and evaluate the whole program.

C. Spelling

1. Aims in the Teaching of Spelling

I. Primary Aims:

- (a) To develop spelling power or a spelling sense which will help the pupil in spelling any required words, not mere mechanical competence in spelling a limited number of drilled words.
- (b) To establish habits of self-dependence in writing; knowledge of how to locate correct spelling; ability to check the accuracy of spelling in all written work; competence in thinking out the spelling of required words; writing of derived forms.

II. Secondary Aims:

- (a) To develop a spelling consciousness, i.e., a critical, enquiring attitude toward one's own spelling.
- (b) To develop a spelling conscience, i.e., an aversion to incorrect spelling.
- (c) To teach correct pronunciation, depth of understanding, and correct usage of words through a comprehensive training in the use of the dictionary.

2. Spelling Lists

Before a child can be taught to spell any words, these conditions must be met:

- (a) The word must be in his reading vocabulary.
- (b) He must be able to hear the sounds and say the word correctly.
- (c) He must be able to see the word clearly, noticing similarities to and differences from other words.
- (d) He must know the names of the letters in the word.
- (e) He must learn eye-hand co-ordination, a difficult task for many beginners.
- (f) He must be taught how to form the letters—both capital and small.

Remembering these criteria, the words the child should learn may be divided into four lists:

- (a) Words that the individual child finds interesting and wants to use and spell.
- (b) Words that the class needs to learn. These words are gathered by the teacher when checking reports and other written work.
- (c) Words of high permanent importance used frequently in the subject fields.
- (d) Words listed in the speller. This list may be checked against the lists in (a) and (b) so that important word will not be missed.

3. Testing and Grouping

In spelling, as in other skills, a great range of abilities and achievement exists

even within one grade in one classroom. Pupils of varying abilities have quite different needs. Thus spelling may not be taught to the whole class, as one group, with success.

The first step in providing differentiated instruction in spelling is to administer and score a spelling ability test, such as Schonell's* The results of such a test will rank the pupils according to spelling ability.

Superior spellers will prove quickly that they need to spend little time on speller lists. Enrichment may include such things as: personal spelling lists of difficult and interesting words, research into word origins, dictionary work, and personal writing.

Retarded spellers should first be given a test to isolate their particular difficulties. As well as remedial work designed to help such difficulties, this group will need extra training in auditory and visual preception and word-attack skills.

4. How To Study Difficult Words

According to Hildreth**, the important points in learning to spell difficult words are described as follows:

“Get a clear-cut picture of the whole word it is normally written or printed. Inspect each word carefully and pronounce it accurately, then put it out of sight and copy the whole word picture from memory.

“What makes this particular word hard to spell? The children try to answer these questions.

What is the initial sound? - - -

What word family or families do you discover in it? - - -

What syllables can it be broken into? - - -

What vowels must be remembered? Are they long or short vowels? What influence have they on other letters? - - -

Does the word contain a sound that can be spelled in more than one way? - - -

What sounds in the word are difficult to hear in ordinary pronunciation? - - -

Does the ending sound rhyme with any other word you know? - - -

The pupil is advised to keep writing the word from memory until the form is fixed in his mind.”

5. Ideas for Teaching Spelling

A. Spelling in the Primary Grades

In addition to teaching children to write words frequently needed, attention should be given to word analysis skills so that children can attack new words with confidence.

These skills should include:

1. Visual discrimination
2. Phonetic analysis

* Schonell, F. J. and F. Eleanor. *Diagnostic and Attainment Testing*, Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 2nd Ed., 1954, pages 69-72.

** Hildreth, Gertrude. *Teaching Spelling*, New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1955.

3. Syllabication
4. Pronunciation
5. Word-building

Once pupils catch the idea of letter-sound associations, they should advance rapidly.

A spelling program at the primary level should include the following approaches:

- (a) Sharpen visual discrimination of word forms by giving exercises which give practice in sight perception of likenesses and differences. Word-matching exercises such as the following might be used. Have the pupils mark the word in each line that is the same as the first word.

done	door	tone	lone	done
rap	sap	rat	rap	pat

Letter discrimination exercises are also valuable. Letters may be matched by drawing lines to connect the letters which are the same.

b	m
d	q
m	b
n	p
p	n
q	d

- (b) The teaching of letter-sound relationships involves both auditory and visual experiences. Beginning with two-letter and three-letter words the pupils are trained to observe the relationship between sound and symbol. The words "vowel" and "consonant" may be taught at this time. Spelling lessons at this stage should stress:

- i. Likenesses and differences in beginning sounds, in beginning letters, and letter combinations.
- ii. Likenesses and differences in final sounds and terminal letters and letter combinations.
- ii.i Rhyming elements in words.

The teaching of phonics in spelling should logically proceed in the order in which vowels, consonants, consonant blends, digraphs, etc., are introduced in the reading series.

In addition to this phonetic training, opportunity for oral reporting and conversation with attention to correct articulation is important.

- (c) When pupils have reached a sufficiently mature level to generalize about word structure and use sounding techniques, they will proceed to more advanced spelling learnings, such as:

1. Syllabication
2. Word-building—adding endings, forming plurals, compounds

3. Formulation of spelling rules

Note: These should be developed through the pupils' own experiences rather than by rote learning.

B. Spelling in the Elementary Grades

In the upper grades interest in spelling as well as ability to spell can be increased by:

I. Consideration of word origins

breakfast—break-fast
business —busy-ness
holiday —holy-day

II. Knowledge of roots of words

submarine
alteration
medication

III. Meaning that prefixes and suffixes imply

sub, re, in, ex, ness, ful, etc.

IV. Correction pronunciation

Accurate pronunciation gives needed oral and auditory clues.
Slovenly speech can easily lead to spelling errors:

supprise for surprise
pitcher for picture
histry for history

To ensure correct spelling through correct pronunciation it is recommended that the teacher:

- a. Articulate precisely as words are often carelessly pronounced.
- b. Require pupils to pronounce words carefully as a first step in word study.
- c. Give pronunciation drill frequently.

V. Grouping words according to similarities

- a. Phonetic elements—teacher, preacher
- b. Spelling rules—knit, knitting
come, coming
fly, flies
- c. Words of like endings—
ate, ure, acy, ance, ence, able, ible
ent, ant, etc.
- d. According to vowel combinations—
ei, ie, ea, ou, etc.

VI. Attention to homonyms

It has been estimated that forty per cent of all spelling errors are made on common homonyms.

Clear these confusions through emphasizing the meaning of the words in content. Homonyms should never be taught in isolation. There is no point in drilling on uncommon words. Rather work on commonly used words which sound or look something alike—quit, quiet, quite; board, broad; though, through, thought; empire, umpire; etc.

Other details of word structure to which the pupils' attention should be directed include: compounding words; use of the hyphen and the apostrophe; possessives; abbreviations and rules for capitalization.

In general, upper-graders should be taught to reason and to generalize as much as English words permit, when they attempt to write new words or recall words.

6. References:

In addition to those already mentioned, the following will be useful:

1. Dawson, Mildred A. *Teaching Language in the Grades*. New York: World Book, 1951.
2. Tidyman, Willard F. and Marguerite Butterfield. *Teaching the Language Arts*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1951.

D. Usage and Grammar

Usage

Usage is the language one actually uses. Certain usage is so common among educated people at any given time that it becomes accepted. What is correct in our generation may sound artificial in the next. Thus usage is flexible and gradually changing.

At any given time various levels of usage exist. "Hi!" is appropriate on the playground but perhaps a little presumptuous before an important visitor: a boy's "How do you do?" sounds polite to adults but he may be a sissy if he says it on the baseball field. Often there is more than one acceptable form of usage because usage must be appropriate for a wide variety of situations. Children should be made aware of these various levels and become sensitive to the way in which language becomes clearer and more effective when it is appropriate.

Errors in usage are forms of expressions that educated people would consider inappropriate in any situation. For example, "He are there," is an error since such a form would not be used in either a formal or informal setting. The usage of educated people and of the business world is stressed in school, but it should be taught as part of the larger picture of usage as it exists. Good usage means clear, effective, and appropriate expression.

The pattern of usage in both oral and written expression is set by speech habits. In an attempt to establish good usage the teacher must accent effective oral expression. Many opportunities for purposeful oral expression may be provided; and answering, discussing, describing, telling and reporting give practice in effective oral expression. The most powerful weapon against poor usage is frequent highly-motivated situations which demand expression. A boy with a new puppy, a girl who has learned to bake a cake, a pupil who has discovered baby guppies in the aquarium, an enterprise group fascinated by Watusi warriors, or the child who knows the answer to a question, and countless others, have the desire and should be given the opportunity to express themselves.

Examples of poor usage will of course be found in the pupils' oral and written work. (The teacher should help pupils find errors by teaching self-evaluation techniques). When listening to reports children should be encouraged to notice examples of effective expression and later to help the reporter improve the sentence that wasn't quite clear. After writing a letter a pupil should be taught to check to see that it says, clearly and effectively, what he wanted to say.

Teacher evaluation runs concurrently with pupil evaluation and discloses abuses of usage both individual and common. Common misuse indicates a lesson for the whole class, including a short exercise. For example, let's suppose a teacher notices "was" and "were" being used incorrectly by many pupils in her class during science period. She might select a number of sentences from science notes or reports from conversation about science where "was" and "were" are used correctly. The sentences may be written on the blackboard. Many children can be led to discover that "was" is used with one person or thing, "were" with two. Individual errors are difficult to provide for completely, but some may be helped through use of workbook pages glued to manilla tag or through the assignment of a short textbook exercise after discovery, understanding, and discussion have taken place.

In dealing with mistakes in usage it is always preferable to associate the

remedial work with a real situation and to return to purposeful expression as soon as possible. Oral practice is particularly important in remedial work.

Grammar

“Grammar is (a) the description of the formation of English sentences, including the relationships of words, phrases, and clauses to each other; and (b) the explanation of choices in those inflexional forms which still survive in modern English.”

The English Language Arts, Vol. I
N.C.T.E., page 284.

Research seems definite that the teaching of grammar in itself does not result in improvement in expression. Grammar is an attempt to analyse usage scientifically and since usage changes grammar must change with it. Grammar, then, is a tool we may use in discussing effective usage so as to help understand such things as vividness and variety. Thus grammar is a means and not an end.

Grammar is a mature and difficult study involving the ability to generalize about many specific examples. Teachers must be sure then that children are ready for grammar before it is taught, and allowance must be made for individual differences. Thus, grammar may be used as enrichment for superior students.

A study of grammar may have two defensible objectives, the first being the most important: (1) grammar may aid in understanding effective expression; and (2) it may explain the correction of some errors in usage. Let's look at an example. Teachers attempt in school to help pupils make their sentences (a) complete, (b) clear, and (c) varied. It is convenient to have children discover two parts to a sentence, what is talked about and what is said about it. Later, when pupils need more convenient terms and are ready, these parts may be called the subject and predicate. It is significant that grammar is of little direct use in helping pupils develop clarity of expression, which is more important than either completeness or variety.

Since grammar is a description of usage many of the principles of teaching usage should be repeated here: first, purposeful practice is essential if good usage is to develop; second, grammar may sometimes help in describing good usage; third, usage, and therefore grammar, should be taught inductively; fourth, oral exercises must be stressed in a remedial program; and finally, a return to expression must be made as soon as possible.

References:

1. *The English Language Arts*, Vol. 1. N.C.T.E. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952.
2. *An Experience Curriculum in English*. N.C.T.E., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1935.

WHEN YOU TEACH LANGUAGE:

Does your class have two (or more) standards for language?

Is the spelling in reports as good as that in spelling period?

Do you expect better language achievement in language period
than in science?

How often do *you* try to express yourself effectively?

Do you sometimes try to write a poem, a story, and a report, at the
adult level?

Are you aware of the problems facing an author, that is, the pupil?

IDEAS THAT HAVE WORKED IN ALBERTA CLASSROOMS

The following are a few of the many ideas Alberta teachers have tried and found successful. These particular techniques are presented with the hope that they may be useful in other classrooms.

A. Oral Reports—Grade IV

I. Class Discussions

The following topics were discussed:

- (a) When should we have oral and when should we have written reports?
- (b) Is there a place for both committee and individual reports?
- (c) What is a personal experience report?

With reference to our experience charts dealing with the preparation of written reports, a chart was drawn up entitled *Preparing an Oral Report*.

Readings from the language text were assigned during these discussions.

II. Oral Reports and Proof Reading

- (a) A few oral reports were prepared and given. After each report the class discussed the report and the reporter, suggesting ways in which the report and its presentation could have been improved. Two proof reading charts developed from these discussions: *The Report* and *the Reporter*.
- (b) Notes were taken by the teacher during each report and the ensuing discussion. These notes:
 - 1. Served as a guide when re-teaching common errors.
 - 2. Were a means of evaluating growth.
 - 3. Were a guide in choosing individual critics for points under *The Report* and *the Reporter*.
- (c) Critics were chosen to watch for particular faults; that is, to be responsible for one of the points on the proof reading charts. These critics were chosen because they needed to be made more aware of the same fault in their own reports.
For example: John did not “stick to his subject.” John is advised to read page 28 of *Gaining Skill With Words*. John will be responsible for checking each report particularly for this point.

III. Oral reports are now prepared, given, and proof read as follows:

- (a) The report is prepared using the experience chart *Preparing an Oral Report*.
- (b) As the report is being given certain pupils watch for specific weaknesses.
- (c) The report is proof read, step by step, using the charts *The Report* and *The Reporter*.
- (d) The class then considers this question:
What one improvement would be most important to make on the report you have just heard?

Experience and Proof Reading Charts

Preparing an Oral Report

1. Decide on a subject.
2. Write down the topics you want to talk about.
3. Arrange these topics in order.
4. Summarize as much as possible.
5. Practice giving the report, using the summary to remind you of what you want to say.
6. Decide on a title.

The Report

1. Was the subject a good one?
2. Did the reporter stick to his subject?
3. Were things told in the right order?
4. Was enough told about the subject to make the report interesting?
5. Were good sentences used in the report?
6. Was the title a good one?

The Reporter

1. Did the reporter stand erect, yet naturally, while he talked?
2. Did he speak clearly and smoothly?
3. Did he speak loudly enough?
4. Did he talk as if he were interested in his own report?

B. The Business Letter: a Language Unit

Step I. The class will discover the essentials of writing a business letter and will develop three charts to serve as proof reading aids.

- (1) There will be a lesson on the parts of a business letter. The content, importance, position, and punctuation of each part will be discussed. A comparison between a friendly and a business letter will evolve. The class will, during discussion, draw up "a list of points to watch in a business letter". The list will be made into a chart by the pupils.
- (2) The class will develop their own list of rules for the use of capital letters and punctuation marks by class and individual analysis of a model letter. The lists will be made into two charts.

Thus three charts will have been made.

1. Points to watch in a business letter.
2. Capital letters.
3. Punctuation marks.

Step II. (1) The content of a business letter, to be written in connection with the current enterprise, will be discussed.

(2) The letter will be written and handed in.

- (3) The teacher will read the letters and:
 - a. pick out three letters which are excellent from point of content;

- b. decide on a common error needing reteaching;
- c. pick out two or three letters containing examples of this error.

(4) Proof reading lesson.

The letters illustrating the common error will be written on the blackboard prior to the lesson or, if possible, projected, using an opaque projector.

- a. The two or three letters which have been picked for excellent content will be read and discussed.
- b. The class will correct together the letters which have been copied on the blackboard; i.e., the letters which illustrate the common error.
- c. Each member of the class will proof read his own letter for this error.
- d. The class proof reads their letter for other errors, one at a time, using the three charts made during step one.

Proof reading for mechanical errors (spelling, punctuation marks, capitals, writing) is done by each pupil on his own letter. Sitting with his committee he is able to discuss any rule about which he is uncertain. Proof reading for content or ideas is done by the committee. The committee reads each letter in turn discussing the ideas in each.

(2) Capital Letters

I. Names of

1. Towns
2. Cities
3. Streets
4. Avenues
5. Months
6. Provinces

- II. The beginning of each word in the greeting.
- III. The first word in each sentence.
- IV. The first letter in the first word of the closing.
- V. The signature.

(3) Punctuation Marks

1. What are the punctuation marks?

- I. Commas
- II. Periods and question marks
- III. Colons.
- IV. Apostrophes

2. Are all the punctuation marks in their right places?
Commas:

- I. Between the city and province
- II. Between the day and the year

- III. After the closing
- IV. To separate the parts of a series

Points to Check in a Business Letter

- I. Check the position of each part
- II. Check the capital letters
- III. Check the punctuation marks, periods, commas and colons
- IV. Proof read for spelling mistakes
- V. Make sure that the body says what it should in good sentences
- VI. Check the writing for:
 - 1. form of letters
 - 2. size of letters
 - 3. slant
 - 4. spacing
 - 5. neatness

Re: Committees

- 1. Committees of three have been found to be the best size.
- 2. Committees should be chosen by the teacher.
- 3. Members should be capable of about the same general effectiveness in language.
- 4. Members should not suffer from similar language disabilities. For example, two poor spellers should not be on the same committee.
- 5. The committee works as follows:
 - (1) A member of a committee proofreads his own letter for mechanical errors.
 - (2) The committee discusses and proofreads for ideas or for anything where varying points of view might have value.
 - (3) The committee is encouraged to talk about their letters, among themselves or with the class.

C. Possible Procedure for Teaching Spelling by "Families"

The following procedure, and variations of it, has been found useful in teaching spelling by "families" in Division II. An adaptation of it would make it suitable for Division I.

a. Preparation:

- 1. All pupils have a good dictionary on their desks.
- 2. Each has rough paper for "trying" words.
- 3. Each has his spelling notebook where he lists the words taught under each family.

b. Procedure:

- 1. The word "family" is chosen.
- 2. The word is chosen by the teacher until the prepared list is exhausted. The pupils' own vocabularies are then drawn upon.

3. Some of the pupils find the word in the dictionary, checking for:
 - i. spelling
 - ii. pronunciation
 - iii. syllabication
 - iv. variety of meaning
4. The rest of the class
 - i. try spelling the word on rough paper
 - ii. syllabicate the word
 - iii. write sentences using as many different meanings of the word as they can.
5. One of the pupils spells the word for the teacher as she writes it on the board. (This should be done while others are looking for the word in their dictionaries, or trying to spell it, etc., as in 4.) As often as is consistent with good psychology, the weaker spellers should do this job, so the teacher has an opportunity to give them personal attention.

c. Culmination:

The class as a whole checks step 2 (under procedure), writes the word in their spelling notebooks, and records sentences using different meanings of the word.

D. Guide Outline for Practical Writing

(This score sheet was actually drawn up by a class for their own use in evaluating their written work).

80% for interest based on the following points:

- a. What was the writer's objective? Was the objective clear and attained?
- b. Was the writer dealing with the topic?
- c. Are ideas arranged in order?
- d. Is the topic dealt with adequately?
- e. Were the words effective and varied?
- f. Are the facts accurate?

15% for spelling and punctuation.

5% for appearance.

E. Grade III Reports
(a combination of written and oral expression)

We Build On:

- (1) A background of oral expression—"showing and telling" dramatizations, relating experiences.
- (2) "Group" charts—each child writes one good sentence about a class experience (e.g. a September Nature Walk) which is compiled with illustrations for the Bulletin Board.
- (3) Practice in telling and writing "made-up" stories and stories that "really happened." These stories are illustrated and perhaps acted out.
- (4) Using numerous examples of child's work around the room (experience charts, children's own stories, room newspaper items, class experiences), introduce the term "report"—What does it mean? How do you tell or write a good report? Through discussions, over *several periods*, using many examples, the children discover the components of a good report. These discoveries are recorded on an experience chart "When I Write A".
- (5) A second experience chart "When I Write B" is compiled to help in the mechanics of writing a good report—(to be used as a guide in any written work).
(The children suggested other experience charts that would be helpful. One was "When I Speak to the Class"—to check on and improve our oral reporting that we did daily in "news" period; "When I am The Audience"—how to act when someone else is speaking; and a "How Words Are Made" chart to help in spelling when they did written reports. All these charts have been added to from time to time).

Steps in Making a Good Report—(whether working with the class as a whole or in groups)

- (1) Gather information
 - (2) Assemble information
 - (3) Organize information
 - (4) Write Report
 - (5) Evaluate
 - (6) Follow-up
- (We follow these steps, but vary the procedure).

Step I.—Gathering Information:

- (1) One group may find the information, while the other children prepare questions they want to ask the "Information Group" about the topic.
- (2) Any class member, on his own, may try to find information on the subject under discussion. He records that he has done so, then contributes orally or in writing what he knows when the group is ready to assemble information.
- (3) The class breaks into several small groups or committees and the child gathers information just within his group on their project.

Later, when completed, the project is shared with the class.

- (4) A "Look Here" board may display a special book or pictures, with caption or a few pertinent questions. Individual children or a committee with the teacher's help are responsible for periodically changing this display, and keeping it interesting and helpful.
- (5) The children are encouraged to try *many* different sources for information—books, pictures, objects, other people, etc.

Step II—Assembling Information:

When at least some of the information has been found, there is a discussion period—

- (1) If written questions were prepared, the "information gatherers" now try to answer these. (They try to speak clearly, use good sentences, and give a complete answer. Others may contribute as well). The answers are recorded briefly by the questions.
- (2) If the questions are oral, the answers may be recorded in point or outline form.
- (3) Sometimes instead of sets of questions, written or oral, certain areas or headings are set up. The children try to "pool" what they know under these headings.
- (4) Each person may contribute orally one interesting fact about the topic. The teacher records these on the board.
- (5) There may be "show and tell" at this time about pictures, objects, etc., that add to the interest and knowledge of the subject.
- (6) If there are gaps in the information, a record is made and the children are encouraged to do more research to try to find the answers.

Step III—Organizing the Information: (talking it over with the teacher and evolving a pattern for the written report).

- (1) If questions have been used, they can be "renumbered" to form a framework. (The children are familiar with this way of "putting in order" in their reading workbooks). This can be done as a group project, or for a change each child might write down what he thinks is a good order. By comparing and discussing with the others, a common logical order can be arrived at.
- (2) If information was gathered *from an outline*, it is organized under these headings as it is assembled. There may still be some "shuffling" within a section.
- (3) Sometimes we set up an outline *after the* information has been gathered. With their background of knowledge, the children are able to suggest major headings quickly to organize their information.
- (4) If there is to be a dramatization, the information can be organized into scenes, acts, etc.

Step IV—Writing the Report: When the children have the information and have

organized it, they are ready to write their reports. (They are encouraged to use the experience charts on writing and spelling, and any special word charts to help them).

- (1) Many children in Grade Three like to write their own reports. Some, however, are not ready to write on their own. The teacher may work out a report on the board with this group, which they then copy. Or the teacher may individually help the children in this group when they need help, but let them try to write in their own words.
- (2) Group report—Different children contribute and the teacher writes the report on the board. The class copies the report in their books. (This group approach might follow oral reports from a small group who have done the first three steps within their group, and are now ready to share with the class what they have learned).

Step V—Evaluating the Report: (This is a very important step for both the children and the teacher).

- (1) The children hand in their reports, the teacher notes common errors, special weaknesses, and returns reports unmarked.
- (2) Each child, with the experience charts as a guide, proof reads his own report for mechanical errors. He checks for one point at a time.
- (3) In small groups the children further proof read—(one report at a time)—with emphasis now on how good the content of the report is or how it could be improved. The children are encouraged to discuss their reports in their group. (Working in pairs seems best).

Step VI—Follow-Up:

- (1) The reports are returned to the teacher. Two or three of the most “interesting” reports are read to the class and discussed.
- (2) Excerpts from a few others that show a common error are read or written on the board and discussed.
- (3) Formal language lessons, based on the apparent weaknesses shown in the children’s writing, follow. Individual difficulties are also noted and worked on.
- (4) The reports may be: a. copied in the children’s books, b. illustrated, c. used in wall charts, reading cards, d. displayed on the bulletin board, e. used in some special project.

Conclusion:

The children feel a real sense of accomplishment when their first approach to written reports follows a method such as this. They are not “floundering about” with a new technique, but are learning to organize information, think critically, and express themselves in both speaking and writing. Language mechanics are not isolated, but are learned for a purpose. The work is challenging, and the results creditable. The children like to be “telling”—orally and in writing; they like to be finding answers to so many things about which they are curious. A very important technique, “reporting” is off to a good start.

WHEN YOU TEACH LANGUAGE:

Do you share your language ideas with other teachers?

Do you discuss language problems informally and at staff meetings?

Does mechanical perfection or expression of ideas get the highest mark in your classroom?

Charts for Grade III Language

When I Write

- A. 1. Did I have a capital letter at these places?
 (a) Beginning a sentence
 (b) For name words—people, places, days, months
 (c) For I
 (d) For important words in the title
2. Did I indent my first sentence?
3. Did I end each statement with a period and each question with a question mark?
4. Did I have any half-sentences? Did I have any run-on sentences?
5. Did I remember to use a helper (have, has, had, was, were) with words like seen, done, run, come, and gone?
6. Did I check our chart on “How Words Are Made” for any spelling help I needed?
- B. 1. Did I pick an interesting topic?
2. Did I try to write about it so that others would be interested too?
3. Did I keep to my topic?
4. Did I tell things in order?
5. Did I tell enough about my topic?
6. Did I try to start my sentences in different ways?
7. Did I use an interesting title?
8. Did I try to use exact words?

When I Was the Audience

1. Did I listen politely to the speaker?
2. Did I sit up straight and quietly?
3. Did I show him that I was interested in what he had to tell me or show me?
4. Did I do anything rude like—
 (a) Walk around
 (b) Talk to someone else
 (c) Read a book
 (d) Go on with some work of my own

When I Spoke to the Class

1. Did I walk up to the front and turn around before I began to speak?
2. Did I stand straight and still?
3. Did I look at my audience and talk right to them?
4. Did I speak in a clear voice?
5. Did I talk about something that I thought would be interesting to the class?
6. Did I keep to my topic?
7. Did I tell things in order?
8. Did I tell enough to make it interesting to my audience?
9. Did I use good language?
10. Did I say things like and, well, this here, and a, uh?
11. Was I greedy about taking more time than I should have so that someone else could not have a turn?

CHILDREN'S WRITING

Grade II

Dear Grandmother,

I am going to come to your house. I'm going to bring my Salamander in a box. I put some dirt in the box. He always digs a hole in the dirt and crawls under it. He sleeps under it all night. One night it rained and it rained in the box and the dirt got wet. When the Salamander went to dig he got all muddy. I put some dirt over him and then I went to school. Mother's calling me now so I must go.

Ronnie,

Edmonton, Alberta.

Dear Mrs. Savage,

My mother and I are leaving for Ireland on June third. We'll be on the train for three days. Then we get off at Montreal. We will be on the ship for twelve days. We get off at Lisburn. I am going to see my aunts. After I get there I will play with my cousins.

Brian O'Neill, St. Basil's School,

Edmonton, Alberta.

Dear Lorna May,

How is the school that you are going to? What grade is your sister in? How is your brother and how is your mother too? We have two dogs. Their names are Black and Brown. When will you come over to our house? My mother is fine.

Shirley Zazulak,

Edmonton, Alberta.

Grade III

The Snow

I look out of the window
And see the clouds so grey.
I think it's going to snow,
But I hope it won't today.

Evelyn Fielding, Gr. III,
Cold Lake, Alberta.

REPORT

Dikes of Holland

In Holland the land is very low and the sea could wash back over the land very easily.

And so they built a dike to hold back the sea. They are trying to increase the land by trying to push back the sea and get more land. They pumped water over the dikes into the deep deep sea. In a few years the land was used for farming.

Where the sea is very strong they build three dikes one behind the other the dikes are called the Sleeper Watcher and the Dreamer. The Sleeper catches any waves that wash over the Watcher. Behind the Sleeper is the Dreamer which hardly even has waves dashing over it.

Grade III. Avonmore School.
Edmonton.

STORY

In the Park

I went to the park by the sea coast. I jumped in the sea a giant wave came and slapped against me and knocked me out of breath I started to sink under the water I saw a crab feeling around and I felt water weeds tickling me. I saw strange kinds of fish wiggling around in between the rocks. I came to the surface again I took another breath went down again this time I saw a purple and yellow fish with sharp fins ready and alert for danger. I came up again and smelt the air come through me.

Grade III. Belgravia School.
Edmonton.

The Clouds

Look at the clouds
So bright and gay.
Soon they all
Will blow away.

Look at the raindrops
Going splashity-splash.
Here comes the thunder
Crashity-crash.

There go the clouds
The storm's all through
Soon the sun will come
To shine in the blue.

Here come the children
Their rain clothes on.
Here comes the wind.
Soon the clouds'll be gone.

Linda Hewson, Gr. IV,
Blueberry Mountain, Alberta.

Stamp of Lundy Island

In 1925 a rich Englishman called Martin Harman bought Lundy Island. It is off the coast of England. He thought, "If I own an island, I will be king of it." So he made coins and issued stamps for the island. The picture on the stamp is a puffin. It is a native bird.

In 1931 the British law fined him for making money and stamps. He was ex-King Harman then. These are the only British stamps issued by a private citizen.

Lawson Carnochan, Gr. IV,
Calgary.

The Country

I like the country when it rains in the spring. After it rains I go out in my bare feet and walk on the grass and in the mud. It feels good when the mud squashes up through your toes. The fresh smell makes you feel good and the odor of perfume of flowers makes you want it to stop like that all the time.

In the morning the birds start to sing. The dewdrops still on the flowers and the farm animals scurrying around. You go to the barn to milk the cows. Then you go fishing at a pond or stream and listen to the frogs and watch chipmunks and squirrels. You can ride calves or horses and watch the men cut hay or wheat. And then in the fall you can go hunting. You can watch the geese or ducks fly south. And in the winter you can go sleigh riding and tobogganing. Then you can chase jackrabbits or weasls and walk on snowshoes. You can build big igloos or dig big wholes in the snow. When Christmas comes you can look for Christmas trees and ride in sleighs pulled by horses. You can jump of high places into the snow.

Larry Ungarian. Grade IV.
H. A. Gray.
Edmonton.

Grade V

STORY

Sounds of Night

One day when we were camping in the woods we heard a piercing cry. We looked all around and saw on a mountainy rock a cyote howling at the moon. I was very scared and ran into the tent. A few minutes later my mother and father came into the tent and asked me if I would mind staying alone for an hour or so. I did mind quite a bit, but I said that I'd be alright.

When they had left I heard a million sounds, like the hustle and bustle of the wind to and froing the trees, the tent door flapping against the tent and still the howling of the cyote. Much to say I was scared I tried to be brave. I heard some clicking sounds that sounded like two coins clicking together. I heard the fire crackle, and I heard people talking from far away.

About an hour later my mother and father came into the tent and saw my head under the covers. They asked me why I had my head under the covers and I hold them all about the sounds I heard.

When I had finished telling them they burst out laughing. "I don't think It was very funny" I told them. After they had split their sides, they told me they had been beside the tent all along. All of a sudden I burst out with laughter too.

Donna-Lynn Sandford,
Grade V, Windsor Park School,
Edmonton.

Leaves

Leaves in the autumn
Leaves in the tree
When the wind is blowing
You sing a song to me.

Brown and gold your colors
Like a fairies touch
Leaves in the treetops
I love you very much,

Merlin Mittelstadt,
Allendale School, Edmonton.

REPORT

Galileo's Experiment

One of the most famous scientists the world has ever know, Galileo, one day tried an experiment with light. He stood on a high hill and had another man stand on one several miles away. He thought that by this experiment he could tell how fast light travels. This experiment failed, however, it took about a second or two to open the shutter and light travels at 186,284 miles per second!

Grade V, Mount Royal School.
Edmonton.

Spring Festival

Spring is when the crocuses
pop up their tiny heads
And lovely scarlet roses rise
up from leafy beds.
The fuzzy little pussy willows
a swaying to and fro
Look like graceful ballerinas
Dancing on their toes.
The little gurgling stream
Flows happily along,
Telling all the others to
Join the happy throng
The dainty little pansies with
their purple pouted face
Can be found most anywhere
Except in swampy places
The wonderous little fireflies
a flying all a glow
Lead the way for weary travellers
where ever they may go
And now the world awakens
birds sing like violins
And the night owls coo from the treetops
The Spring Festival Begins!

Beverly Forbyts and Cheryl Onyschuk,
Grade VI. H. A .Gray,
Edmonton.

Pearl Fishing

The outfit worn by a pearl diver is a rubber suit, 40-pound boots, and a metal helmet. The divers look for pearls near Broome, Darwin and Thursday Island.

It is dangerous where these pearl divers look for pearls, they could be attacked by sharks or cut in two by the sharp teeth of huge reef-eels, or trapped in the jaws of giant clams that measure twelve feet across.

Scores of natives wear nothing but goggles and go down 150 feet to fill their baskets with some oysters weighing ten pounds apiece.

A pearl is formed when a piece of sand enters the oyster and irritates it. The shellfish covers the rough particle with a layer of slime, adding more and more every year.

Alice McGuckin,
Grade VI, Mount Royal School,
Edmonton.

An Experience in the Country

It all happened one day when I was visiting my girlfriend in the country. We had decided to take a walk in the woods which was a little ways from her home. After walking for awhile my girlfriend said, "Let's play hide and seek."

I agreed and we started playing with her it. I ran to hide for what I thought was approximately a half block but later turned out to be about three blocks. I looked around. Birds were busy chirping and building houses. Rabbits and gophers were running here and there. I got tired and sat down on a bit of grass that was green. I fell asleep and dreamt I was in a lovely woods. I was by a little creek with flowers and green grass growing all around. I didn't watch where I was going and suddenly up to my knees in water! I then awoke and found it was getting dark. I started in the direction I thought my girlfriend's home was. (It turned out I had gone north instead of south).

Meanwhile at my girlfriend's home she had arrived and asked if I had come home. Her mother and father said no and decided they had better look for me.

I had been walking when I saw a deer and started chasing it. Suddenly I tripped and turned my ankle. I tried to get back but fell back and became unconscious.

When I finally woke and found myself on a bed at my girlfriend's house. They had found me after awhile and had then decided to let me look at the country by sitting on the verandah.

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